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POLICE STATIONS CLOSURE 'UNFAIR'

Report by Andrew Turton

POLICE station closures are 'unfair and unnecessary' according to an MP, after dates when doors will shut for good were confirmed.

Closure dates for 13 police stations in the Black Country have been confirmed as part of £8.6 million cuts — and Netherton in Dudley is first to go.

West Midlands Police is shutting 28 stations in total across its area. The Netherton police base will shut on January 31 alongside others in Wolverhampton and Great Barr.

Dudley station will follow on August 31, with Halesowen police station due to close on January 31, 2017. Kingswinford police station is also expected to close within the next 18 months.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson said the force had to take 'difficult decisions'.

But Dudley South MP Mike Wood, whose constituency covers Netherton and Kingswinford, said the move would have a major impact.

"There is no requirement for the commissioner to pursue his plans to close stations in Kingswinford and Netherton," he said.

Listen

"I have said that closing two stations within my constituency was both unfair and now unnecessary."

"The Government, following representation from MPs like myself, has changed the formula for funding forces such as West Midlands Police and, as a result, its budget will not face any budget reductions."

"Therefore the reasons for closing any of the named stations is no longer viable and the Commissioner should do as the Chancellor has done — listen to representation and change his mind," said the Conservative MP.

Councillor Elaine Taylor, for Netherton, Woodside and St Andrews, Dudley, said: "We have been told the closure of our station is still happening but they are looking at having an office in the locality so the public still have that service and that presence in the area. We are keeping our PCSOs, which we are very happy about."

Commissioner Jamieson said: "Between 2010 and 2015 West Midlands Police was cut harder than any other force in the country which means we still have difficult decisions to make."

"My priority always will be people not buildings. Many people from across the political divide have realised this. The overriding view of police professionals is that officers, not buildings, keep people safe."

Dudley North Labour MP Ian Austin and Conservative MP for Halesowen and Rowley Regis James Morris have campaigned against station closures. But Margaret James, Tory MP for Stourbridge, has supported the move, previously saying that the closures would have 'minimal impact'.

IT'S HAPPY EVER AFTER FOR BILL, 90, AND FLO, 96



The happy couple, 96-year-old Flo Marshallsey and 90-year-old Bill Griffiths were married at St Hilda's in Warley Woods

DEARLY beloved, we are here to witness the story of Britain's oldest newly weds — inspirational Black Country couple Bill Griffiths, aged 90, and 96-year-old Florence 'Flo' Marshallsey have proved it is never too late to live happily ever after.

The pair, who have known each other for almost 20 years and lived together for the best part of a decade, exchanged their vows at a packed St Hilda's Church in Warley Woods.

Albion fan Bill wore a Baggies tie with his suit while Flo, who was given away by grandson Mark, donned a dress from John Lewis.

The occasion was led by family friend Reverend Paul Hinton. Flo, who ran the Malt Shovel pub in Dudley for nearly 40 years, said: "Reverend Paul was mentioning all these countries and I didn't know what he was on about. Then I worked out they have all been saying we're the oldest people to get married."

"The church was full, it was amazing. It's been absolutely wonderful."

Father-of-three Bill, a former engineer, used to go dancing with his late wife Joan, until she died in 1997. It was thought dancing

that he first met mother-of-two Flo. After Joan died the couple became inseparable with Flo eventually agreeing to move in to Bill's house in Oldbury. Bill popped the question to Flo last year. "I was gobsmacked when he asked me to marry him," added Joan.

Mr Hinton said: "It is not every day that a vicar anywhere has the privilege of marrying two people whose combined ages would make a very good cricket score. And it is certainly not every day that nearly 200 years of wisdom, experience and love are brought together to make these age-old vows."

SECURITY

Pupils evacuated due to bomb hoax

A SCHOOL in Halesowen and three schools in Sandwell were evacuated after they received hoax bomb threats on Tuesday.

Police attended Leasowes High School in Halesowen, Bristall Hall Academy, Oldbury Academy and Holly Lodge in Oldbury but, following searches, West Midlands Police said that no bombs or suspicious objects had been found.

Dudley Councillor Ian Cooper, cabinet member for children's services, said: "We can reassure parents that the situation was dealt with quickly and safely."

ACCIDENT

Motorist dies after sports car hits tree

A DRIVER died after his sports car crashed into a tree and lamp post near Stourbridge.

Other motorists attempted to save 24-year-old Lee Wassell, of Clee View Road, Wombourne, following the crash on the A458 Bridgnorth Road, near Stourton, but he was pronounced dead at the scene by paramedics.

Floral tributes have been placed at the scene of the accident, where his Subaru Impreza crashed at 12.50am on Saturday.

EDUCATION

Parents in protest over school threat

AROUND 40 angry parents staged a protest on the steps of Dudley Council House against the proposed closure of The Coseley School.

Parents and children, waving banners, gathered outside the Priory Road building on Monday evening before the council's cabinet meeting, where the school was discussed behind closed doors.

Parents and pupils were shocked by the move, which was announced at a special assembly, to start consultation over the school's future.

More than 1,500 have since signed a petition to save the school.

INSIDE

MEMORIES OF THE STAR MAN



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CONTACT US

EDITORIAL:
Tel: 01384 353201/01384 353205
E-mail: dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

SPORTS:
Tel: 01902 319453
E-mail: chron.sport@expressandstar.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHIC:
Tel: John Sam Brooks 01902 319431

ADVERTISING: Emma Parkes
Tel: 01384 353234
E-mail: emma.parkes@expressandstar.co.uk

PROPERTY: Marguerita Finnegan
Tel: 01902 319627
E-mail: marguerita.finnegan@expressandstar.co.uk

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Council pay out £380k in injury claims

DUDLEY Council has paid out more than £380,000 to people on injury claims since 2013, new figures reveal.

The cash-strapped authority received 609 claims from 2013/14 to the present date, with 121 of those claims successful.

In total, the council has been forced to hand out £87,411 in that period.

The biggest claim was on July 5, 2013, when the authority had to pay £18,120 for a break or fracture caused by a pothole.

The council faces huge financial challenges in the next five years and has just revealed a second tranche of budget savings to contend with.

UKIP Councillor Paul Brothwood said the cash paid out was money the council could ill afford to spend and needed to be reduced.

Cabinet member Councillor David Sparks said the council worked hard to ensure the borough was safe and clean but could not prevent 'unavoidable' incidents.

Councillor Brothwood claimed the extent of the injury payouts suggested a lack of investment by the authority. He said: "I think this is a reflection of the poor investment from the council into our roads and pavements. I know money from central Government has been made available but not a lot of it seems to have been spent in the borough.

"I think the level of money paid out is a consequence of not improving the roads and pavements at the same time – instead of doing one then coming back to do the other," Councillor Brothwood added. "It's far more cost effective to do them all at once. I would far rather that £380,000 had been spent on improving Dudley borough's roads."

Finance boss Councillor Sparks said: "We work hard to ensure the borough is a safe and clean place to be but obviously there will be unavoidable occasions where incidents can happen. We have a robust process in place to evaluate claims coming in to the council, and where we are found to be at fault, those cases are dealt with appropriately."

Last chance to sign up for energy auction bid

DUDLEY residents have only got just over a week to register for an energy auction that council bosses say could save them hundreds of pounds on their bills.

More than 5,000 people have already registered with the Big Switch campaign backed by Dudley Council.

The more people who register for the auction, the better the deal offered by energy companies.

The last auction attracted nearly 800 people and 98 per cent of them made savings.

The closing date for the latest auction, in which the public join together to get a better deal, is February 1.

Councillor Pete Lowe, leader of the council, said: "As a community council, we are extremely pleased with this successful initiative which is free and easy to join. Our Big Switch auctions are able to secure energy rates that are not available direct from suppliers or price comparison sites."

"Anyone who signs up is under no obligation to switch suppliers, but with savings of an average of £300 a year, more and more people are seeing the benefits of switching to this collective way of buying energy."

The scheme is open to all householders, including people living in rented accommodation, those with a prepayment meter or people paying for dual fuel or gas and electricity separately, and those with a fuel debt of £500 or less. Visit www.dudley.gov.uk and search for Big Switch or call 0300 555 2345 for details.

Lawyers choose MND as charity

BLACK Country law firm George Green has chosen the Motor Neurone Disease Association as the charity it will raise funds for during 2016.

MND is the only national charity in England, Wales and Northern Ireland focused on MND care, research and campaigning. The disease affects up to 5,000 adults in the UK at any one time. It is a fatal progressive disease that affects the brain and spinal cord, attacking the nerves that control movement. The association funds research, as well as funding specialist equipment and support grants for people diagnosed with MND.

The law firm will be participating in various events to raise money for the charity including its own Walk to D'feet, a walk from the firm's office in Cradley Heath to its office in Wolverhampton.

Proposal for flats at care home site

A CARE home in Dudley will be turned into flats, under new proposals before planners.

The plan for Beech Tree House Care Home, in Hinley Road, has been submitted to Dudley Council by developer Mohammed Ali.

Sisters hurt by dog attacks on same day

A TWO-YEAR-OLD girl and her sister were attacked by a dog, suffering injuries within hours of each other, a court heard.

The girls were both bitten by the Akita/Husky crossbreed, one of two dogs owner Susan Russen handed over to police following the incidents.

Russen, aged 32, of The Beck, Netherton, pleaded guilty to being in charge of a dog allowing it to be dangerously out of control and causing injury.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that the girls, whose mother is a friend of Russen, had been fussing the dog when it turned nasty.

Defence barrister Stephen Hamblett told the court about the incident on July 2. He said: "Her friend has two young daughters and they were all at her house. One of the dogs attacked her two-year-old, and she had two small cuts. She was taken to hospital at around 2pm."

Judge

"They returned later that day at 6pm. Her other daughter, who was seven at the time, was fussing the dog, as children do. The dog then bit her. She sustained two cuts on her chin. She didn't go to hospital."

Judge James Burbidge was shown pictures of the injuries. The attack happened close to Russen's home.

Mr Hamblett told the court that Russen had handed over both dogs to police.

Judge Burbidge told Russen: "I take into account that you have pleaded guilty at the earliest opportunity."

"You had no reason to believe that the dog would attack in the way that it did in the first instance, although it could be argued you should have done more as a precaution to stop the second attack from happening. I have seen the injuries and they are nasty looking injuries."

"I understand that you are friends with the girls' mother and you have shown remorse. But you must be punished. It hasn't been said whether the older of the two girls will suffer from scarring. But she could suffer psychologically when confronted with a dog in the future. I understand you must be a dog lover, so giving them up must have been very difficult for you."

He sentenced her to 70 hours community service.

King Arthur is put to the sword



Going going... 1930s Dudley pub the King Arthur pictured midway through the demolition process

A LANDMARK at a gateway to Dudley has been demolished to make way for a supermarket.

The 1930s roadside King Arthur pub, next to the Birmingham New Road, has been knocked down to clear the site for a new Aldi store.

Residents have long been split over the fate of the locally-listed building, which closed down as a pub in 2012 and had become an eyesore after it became a target for vandals.

The future of the site was sealed by planning bosses last year after heritage groups had declined to come to its rescue.

Councillor Alan Finch, who has overseen the planning process, said: "It is sad to see the King Arthur pub go, but I think it's fantastic for the local community to have a new outlet to go to."

"There is nothing like this (supermarket) around the Castle and Priory area. We are looking at new jobs for the local people."

Supermarket giant Aldi stepped forward with plans to develop the site last year, creating 40 jobs.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin asked residents living near the pub whether they backed the supermarket plans. Out of more than 900 respondents, 80 per cent said yes.

But Sedgley Councillor and UKIP MEP Bill Etheridge raised a petition with 102 signatures calling for the pub to be retained.

The pub was built in 1939 by Dudley architects Webb and Gray.

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Sainsbury's looking to take over Argos chain

THREE Argos stores in Dudley borough could be closed and jobs lost as Sainsbury's looks to take over the retailer and relocate sites within supermarkets.

The shops on Dudley High Street, the Merry Hill centre and Halesowen's Cornbow centre are all under threat.

Sainsbury's made the revelations after it set out its case for a £1 billion-plus takeover of Home Retail Group, which incorporates both Argos and Homebase. The bid deadline is February 2.

In a presentation outlining its plans, Sainsbury's said it would look to shut a number of the 734 units in the Argos chain and bring them into its supermarkets as concessions.

Sources close to Sainsbury's believe between 150 and 200 Argos shops could be impacted and that places all 16 in the Black Country and Staffordshire under threat.

Dudley councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: "I hope these stores are not under threat because they seem to be doing well. Argos in Merry Hill is big and one of the major stores. Dudley is vibrant and my hope and wish is that it won't be under threat. The same for Halesowen."

Deputy leader, Councillor Judy Foster, added that she welcomed Sainsbury's bailing Argos out if it was in trouble but that she hoped they would opt to save the three local shops.

There are already 10 Argos concessions in the supermarket chain in the UK as part of a trial.

Injured passenger no longer critical

A MAN badly hurt when a van hit a tree in Dudley is no longer in a critical condition. Two men — the driver and front seat passenger — had to be cut free from the Ford Escort after the smash in Clee Road, which was closed for several hours following the accident at around 1.30pm on January 6.

Two back seat passengers, women aged 44 and 38, were also injured.

The 37-year-old driver is recovering in hospital, whilst a 35-year-old man was originally in a critical condition but was said to be improving.

Sergeant Paul Hughes said: "It is important that we piece together the events leading up to the collision."

Anyone with information should contact the Collision Investigation Unit on 101.

Ukulele players perform at library

THE Ukulele Union are performing at a Halesowen library. They promise an evening of fun, music and laughter at the Long Lane Library on January 29 from 7pm to 9pm. Doors at 6.45pm. Tickets £3 with refreshments.



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Brighter future after church revamp



Rev Stuart Scott at St John's, Stourbridge

A £16,000 scheme to repair and upgrade a Victorian church in Stourbridge has been hailed a success.

But fundraising will continue to further improve, protect and modernise the grade II listed St John's United Reformed Church.

The project to repair parts of the church in the town centre at St Johns Road was funded by various grants.

The work saw repairs to internal parts of the roof at the 1860 building, transformed the vestry into a meeting room, upgraded lighting and saw heating and electrics checked.

As well as being a place of worship, the building is used as a venue for events such as art exhibitions, plays, concerts and the town's foodbank.

Landfill

Funding for the work came from The Veolia Environmental Trust, which awarded £8,670 through the Landfill Communities Fund.

Also contributing to the church repairs were Dudley Community Forum, which awarded £5,000, and the Joseph Scott Chapel Charity, which gave £2,000.

The congregation plan to continue fundraising so repairs can be carried out on the external part of the roof and to develop community space.

Reverend Stuart Scott said: "This important work has enhanced our grade II listed building and contributed to its long-term sustainability."

He added: "The new meeting space will be used by a variety of organisations, including the foodbank. We can now look forward to a brighter future."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Roof man rescued and then arrested

A MAN had to be rescued from a roof in Upper Gornall.

Passers-by alerted emergency services when the man was seen on the property in Jockey Fields at around 3pm on Friday.

A 22-year-old man was arrested after a four-hour stand-off with police.

A cordon was set up around the building and a section of road closed to traffic until the incident ended peacefully around 7pm.

A man was arrested afterwards on suspicion of criminal damage and affray.

Four homes on old garage site

FOUR homes will be built on the site of former garages in Coseley, after plans were given the green light.

The two-bed houses will be constructed between Mars Close and Priory Field.

The garages have already been knocked down.

A council officer's report said: "The proposal respects the character and distinctiveness of the area, making a positive contribution... through high-quality design without harming the amenity of existing or future occupiers."

Have butchers at apprentices

A BUTCHER has joined forces with Dudley College to enrol apprentices on a new 'Trailblazer' course.

Walter Smith Fine Foods became the first employer to register three of its apprentices on the Butchery Trailblazer apprenticeship programme, approved by the Government. It is the first Trailblazer to be delivered by Dudley College.

To find out more contact Sanjeev Ohri on (01384) 363 335 or email sanjeev.ohri@dudleycol.ac.uk

New hedges were laid at Wren's Nest reserve

THE Friends of Wren's Nest were joined by the Friends of Alder Copice to carry out hedge laying at the Wren's Nest National Nature Reserve in Dudley.

More than 20 people of all ages took part in freezing cold conditions on Saturday morning and they were provided with expert tuition by the Wren's Nest wardens provided the expert tuition.

• Geopark bid — page 19

Centre Sherlock show

A KINVER drama group's latest play is a story about the Great Detective.

Sherlock Holmes and The Mystery of Mallen Hall by The New Kinver Players is from the Edward Marsh Centre from February 10 to 13. Tickets cost £9, £7 for over-60s. Buy at www.nkp.org.uk or call (01384) 877746.

Credit union scrap cash over the counter service

COUNCIL bosses have promised members of a credit union in Dudley they will still be able to access their money after its over-the-counter cash facility was scrapped.

Critics say the changes at the Castle and Crystal Credit Union in New Street will hit the poorest families in the borough hardest.

The facility, run by Dudley Council, provides saving accounts for members and allows them to borrow cash from others.

Officials have reassured members they will still be able to access their savings despite no longer having the option to physically withdraw cash from the union building.

The changes are due to come into force from April.

Councillor Rachel Harris, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: "Castle and Crystal is not closing. This is about a change to our cash withdrawal services.

"Members are still able to access their savings in many other ways and other services will continue to run as normal."

Transfer

"There are a number of other ways in which members can access their money, including online and telephone banking or a BACS transfer to a nominated bank account."

"Alternatively people can purchase a prepaid card which enables them to withdraw cash from an ATM machine, can be used online or to get cash back, free of charge, from supermarkets."

However, Sedgley councillor Bill Etheridge has hit out at the fact members will incur added costs as a result of the change. The prepaid debit card will cost £3.50 with additional costs every time withdrawals are made at cash machines.

Councillor Etheridge said: "Some of these people rely on their last couple of pounds to get them through to their next payday or benefits payment."

"From April, they will not be able to access anything under a tenner. This is just one more inconvenience and cost for the poorest members of our society. People rely on credit unions when they cannot get a current account at a bank."

Car flipped over on icy road



Firefighters with the car that ended up on its roof in Pedmore Road, as icy conditions took a toll

A CAR flipped onto its roof in Stourbridge during icy conditions on Saturday morning.

A pregnant woman was witnessed falling. Eye-witnesses described seeing two women fall within quick succession of each other.

Afterwards people phoned Dudley Council asking them to grit the road, which took place shortly before 11am, nearly an hour after the women fell.

Environment boss Councillor Hilary Bills: "We are aware of an incident in the town centre this morning which was caused by freezing temperatures and snow.

Clearly the council cannot grit every footpath in the borough but we do try and make public areas as safe as possible but would ask people to be careful."

Major routes through the Black Country were badly affected by crashes throughout the day.

There was tailbacks along the Birmingham New Road following a two-car smash near Sedgley Road West, Tipton.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



BACK in the days of churchgoing, assemblies, sing-songs in the pub and sea shanties around the school piano, we learned how to hold a tune in our heads. The Brits could sing. This week, in the massive media overkill that marked David Bowie's passing, some TV and radio reporters invited members of the public to sing their favourite Bowie hits. And what a dire, off-key caterwauling ensued. What a tuneless nation we have become.

A SURVEY of grass-roots Labour supporters reveals the party has grown, moved to the Left and thinks its new leader is great. I'm not sure if this tells us anything except that Jeremy Corbyn has a lot of support – among his supporters.

A READER points out that although the immensely entertaining Dickensian (BBC1) is set in the deep mid-winter with snow crunching under foot, no-one has frosted breath.

THANKS for all your items on the subject of chucking out a favourite pair of old shoes. Most were funny tales. And then suddenly this: "In 1971 I bought new black shoes to walk my wife-to-be down the aisle. Forty years later, in 2011, after much wear, repair and polishing, I wore the same shoes to walk her coffin again down the aisle. You can't put a price on all the memories a much-loved pair of shoes can hold."

A READER tells me he phoned his local radio station to be told he was the first caller of the day and thus qualified for the mystery grand prize, if he could answer one simple maths question. By chance, he has a degree in mathematics. The prize was two front-row seats at a Justin Bieber concert. The crucial question – what is two plus two? Without a moment's hesitation he replied: "Potato." I'm not sure I believe a word of it, but I never entirely dismiss the conspiracy theory that the chief purpose of local radio is to rot the nation's brains.

WHY do some doctors have such a downer on booze? One suggestion this week came from health writer Tony Edwards. He says some research suggests moderate drinkers are less likely to suffer from a wide range of diseases. But as he puts it: "The job of doctors is to help sick people rather than healthy ones, so they inevitably see the casualties of alcohol, never its beneficiaries." So most doctors will see alcoholics dying of liver disease while never meeting the moderate drinker who enjoys a glass of wine a day and, inexplicably, never catches a cold.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Councillor backs teen ban to ease fears

A BAN on teenagers at a Stourbridge town centre car park, which has been plagued by vandalism and anti-social behaviour, could finally bring its problems to an end, says a councillor.

A Public Space Protection Order has been introduced at the multi-storey Ryemarket car park, prohibiting under-18s from entering the car park unless driving a vehicle or accompa-

nied by a responsible adult. Councillor Nicholas Barlow said he hoped the move would put stop to the issues that have given the car park a bad reputation and may lead to it being open at night again.

He believes many motorists have been put off from using it for fear of their vehicles being damaged. In October, council bosses decided to shut the car park at night to combat the

problem but it was felt that further measures were needed.

Councillor Barlow said: "They have got to explore every option available under legislation and it has to be brought forward to give them the strength to deal with these groups which have been causing problems on the Ryemarket car park.

"It has to be looked at and implemented to see what feedback we get

and what the impact is. We need to use whatever powers possible. We need to reassure the public their cars are going to be as safe as possible."

"The car park is there for people to park their cars safely without the thought of having whatever number of people congregating in a corner. It may be they are just admiring the views of Stourbridge but it's just that fear factor."

Free return tickets for visitors to winter zoo

VISITORS to Dudley Zoo in January and February will receive a free return trip.

Bosses say it will enable people to see the attraction at different times of the year.

Curator Richard Brown said: "The zoo changes so much during each season that we wanted to encourage visitors to come and see it for themselves."

"During the winter months it's much quieter on site, the trees are bare and those animals who are native to colder climates are more active – whereas during the height of summer the zoo is bustling, the gardens and blooming and different animals are enjoying the warmer weather."

The return ticket will be valid for six months from the visit date and an original receipt from the January or February visit will be needed.

Meanwhile, the zoo has revealed that more than 2,200 people filed into the Castle Hill attraction in the week between Christmas and New Year, which is almost 800 more than the same week in the previous year.

Attendance was at its highest on Monday, December 28, which was a bank holiday, and Tuesday, December 29 when more than 1,000 crammed into the zoo, which celebrates 80 years next year.

Zoo director Derek Grove said: "We've seen a year-on-year increase of December school holiday visitors and we're delighted with these latest figures and glad so many people enjoyed the chance to explore the zoo."

Museum recruiting £50k-a-year chiefs

THE Black Country Living Museum is recruiting two new deputy chief executives as a major revamp of the attraction gets under way.

It comes after recent figures showed that visitor numbers were up eight per cent at the Tipton Road attraction in the last 12 months, raking in an extra £500,000 towards new development.

The two new deputy chief executive roles will focus on visitor engagement, operations and collections, learning and research, with salaries starting at £50,000 a year.

Bosses say that the new vacancies have been given new titles for what were previously directors.

Vicki Stanley, who is deputy chief executive of development, explained: "It will give much clearer leadership and management of the museum."

Betrothed couples can visit wedding venue

COUPLES are being offered the chance to have a look around Himley Hall and see if it is the wedding venue for them. A free open day will be held on Sunday, between 11am and 4pm, when future brides and grooms will be able to tour the historic hall.

Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass in a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn the job when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people

I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118 and he'll be happy to help!



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Why less is more for the film goers

QUENTIN Tarantino's new movie, *The Hateful Eight*, seems to be the film of choice for those in the know at the moment. The western, set in the aftermath of the American Civil war, lasts a numbing three hours seven minutes.

It follows hot on the heels of *Spectre*, the longest Bond movie ever, at two hours 40 minutes. And of course, a few years ago there was *War Horse*, another acclaimed movie that was also the best part of three hours.

Whatever happened to the 90-minute film? It wouldn't be so bad, but you now have to sit through half an hour of trailers, non-smoking warnings, and threats of what will happen if you film the movie on your phone, before you even begin. As if you could record a three-hour movie on your mobile.

Besides, too many films these days seem to be filled with padding just to make them last longer.

Take *Captain Phillips*, for example, the film about the captain of a ship hijacked by pirates. The first 15 minutes was about his drive to work and fears for his son's future. Or the *Kingsman*, where half an hour was spent messing about with a light aircraft. Just get on with it.

Look, I'm not pining for the days of a B-movie to act as the warm-up, an interval in the middle to change spools, and a spot of *Pathe* news to keep us abreast of what is going on in the world. But I do think that an hour-and-a-half is long enough for any story, and if a film runs for as long as an ice-hockey match, then it should be edited more tightly.

■■■

I TRUST that you are now sleeping more soundly at night, after our lawmakers spent two hours debating why they did not want to ban Donald Trump from entering the UK.

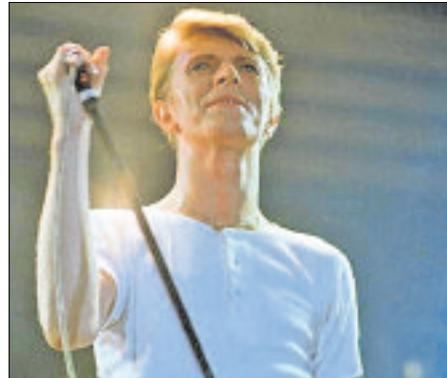
The debate, if you can call it that, given that nobody apart from Alex Salmond was in favour of a Trump ban, was triggered because 500,000 of the professional malcontents who spend most of their lives moaning on Twitter and Facebook had signed a petition. Do these people never take a day off?

There is the small matter of the fact that the talking Shredded Wheat has never indicated any plans to visit the UK – he would probably struggle to find it on a map – but, hey, let's not that get in the way of a spot of student-union grandstanding. But next time, maybe the Twittersphere might turn their attention to something that actually affects us?

■■■

ACCORDING to the latest healthy eating guidelines from the Department of Health, we are now expected to restrict ourselves to 30g of sugar a day, the equivalent of nine sugar lumps.

Except Chris Huhne, of course. He's letting the missus have his points.



Thin White Duke — Bowie on stage at Stafford in 1978



Tin Machine saw Bowie fronting a hard rock band at the Civic Hall



Bowie at the NEC, he brought several tours to the mega-venue

Starman memories left by icon Bowie

David Bowie influenced more than one generation via his music, fashion, art and ideas
PETER MADELEY reports

IF it hadn't been for David Bowie, most of the rock stars, broadcasters and writers who made it out of the West Midlands would never have got started.

There would have been no Birmingham-based Duran Duran and no Black Country combo Pop Will Eat Itself.

Alternative music and new wave would have had as much chance of making it into the mainstream as avant garde jazz. The star who implored 'Let's Dance' was the starting point for three generations of artists.

His untimely death at the age of 69 robs us of one of music's greatest icons, a true innovator who ranks alongside The Beatles and Elvis as being one of the most influential artists of all time.

Influence

Pop Will Eat Itself founder Clint Mansell, for instance, is presently one of Hollywood's most influential soundtrack writers.

But without Bowie, he'd never have started. He counts Bowie as the main influence on his musical career.

Clint, from Stourbridge, believes there have been 12 key moments in his life.

The first was his birth in 1963. The next significant episode was in 1972 when he saw David Bowie perform 'Starman' on Top of the Pops. The experience changed his life.

Clint's third key moment came that year when he bought his first album 'The Rise & Fall of Ziggy Stardust'. After that, he was only ever going to be a rock'n'roll star.

John Penney, whose band Ned's Atomic Dustbin, followed Pop Will Eat Itself and The Wonder Stuff into the charts and onto the stages of the nation's biggest festivals, has a similar debt of gratitude to Bowie.

Jonn, from Wolverhampton, said: "To be



Ziggy played guitar — Bowie in a reflective moment backstage at Birmingham Town Hall

honest, I kinda feel unqualified to comment on Bowie," he said. "He's so iconic. He's such a genius. What can I say about him? I guess the thing about Bowie is what he stood for; whether that was intended or not. He was utterly unique.

"He made it okay for people to plough their own furrow, rather than follow the herd. He sort of ratified that, he justified it too. But beyond that, he showed everyone that the best music they can make is the most honest music."

Slade drummer Don Powell, who grew up in Bilston, said he was fortunate enough to meet

The Thin White Duke at a gig at Wolverhampton's Civic Hall in the early 1970s.

"I managed to get backstage and explained to him that the first record I ever bought was Space Oddity (Bowie's album from 1969).

"I was shocked because for someone so famous he was very unassuming and quiet, almost to the point of being shy. It is all very sad. We've only just lost Lemmy and now Bowie. Two of the greats gone in the blink of an eye."

West Midlands music producer Pete Waterman said: "Bowie was as important to pop music as The Beatles. He was extraordinarily

talented. The Let's Dance album to me is one of the greatest pop albums of all time, every bit as good as Sgt Pepper."

Mr Waterman, a veteran of 26 Bowie live concerts, added: "He was a showman who was able to wrap a simple pop song up into something completely different."

"He was just amazing. I only met him twice and found him incredibly quiet."

Wolverhampton author Caitlin Moran broke down in tears during a Bowie track on BBC Radio Two's Jeremy Vine show.

She said: "This is such a sad day. It feels like someone's taken the core out of the Earth."

"As a child of my generation he seemed to be everywhere."

Bowie played numerous iconic gigs around the Black Country, Birmingham and Staffordshire, including three nights at Stafford's Bingley Hall in June 1978.

Some recall him appearing at venues in Birmingham and Wolverhampton in the 1960s before he found fame, and support slots for Marc Bolan's band T Rex and Humble Pie, the group fronted by former Small Faces singer Steve Marriott.

He graced the stage at Wolverhampton's Civic Hall, firstly in 1973 on the Ziggy Stardust tour and later with his hard rock band Tin Machine in 1991.

He also performed at Birmingham Town Hall in 1970s and at the NEC during the 1980s and 90s.

Reality

In 1997 he was a surprise addition to the bill at the Phoenix Festival held at Long Marston Airfield near Stratford-upon-Avon and played a low-key gig at Birmingham city centre's Que Club.

He appeared finally in the Midlands as part of his A Reality Tour in 2003. That tour was cut short when Bowie had a heart attack, which began his withdrawal from concert performances. The singer's death was announced last Monday, just two days after the release of his 25th album *Blackstar*, when it was revealed that he had been battling cancer for 18 months.

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Soon after, a kitten roughly four months old, turned up on the front step. In spite of attempts to find the owner, nobody claimed her, so we had acquired another cat.

As we have always lived on main

male cat has turned up and decided

that this is home. We are also visited by two blue cats and a black one with a red collar. We have no idea to whom they belong, but they seem to think that we run a cats cafe.

We would love to know to whom they belong, or have they just been left when their owners moved. Much as we love animals the cost of feeding them is now more than feeding ourselves. Why do more people not tether their cats? This would negate the fear of them being poisoned or catnapped.

L HALES
Cradley Heath

Rotary Club thanks for charity help

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

dudley.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Moaning dog owners can like it or lump it

CAN someone explain to me why there has been so much coverage on this 'dog ban' at Himley Hall?

If dog owners don't like it they will just have to lump it – haven't they got better things to worry about?

I know that I have.

I laughed my socks off at a sorrowful photo of dog owners who will have to find other parts of the park to walk their dog, oh dear me what a shame. After all there are only about 200 acres or so, that's going to cause them a big problem isn't it!

Anyway, isn't 'dog ban' a huge exaggeration? When it really is just an area that is going to be 'dog free', and good news for a lot of the public I'm sure.

They even had the arrogance to think they should have been consulted! Who do they think they are?

Have the non-dog owners and those with children ever been asked if they are happy about things?

Can I make a suggestion? If you are so bothered about your little darlings getting their exercise and being let off their leads – why don't you try your own back gardens then?

A BLAKE
Dudley

Floods — shame of the drains

FURTHER to the letter from P Cole (Chronicle Letters, January 7), It's simple — clear drains, I can only agree with his comments.

When you think of all the blood, sweat and tears that went into constructing these drains by hand without any mechanical equipment, just picks and shovels in Victorian times.

P Cole is correct in that not many years ago the drains were cleaned out every other week.

Now Bridgnorth Road in Wollaston is like a raging river after the lightest rain fall and all of the water collects at the bottom of the hill within the shopping area.

Dudley Council should be ashamed of themselves for letting this situation continue.

Come on Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council — get your finger out and do something about this.

B A WEAVER
Wollaston

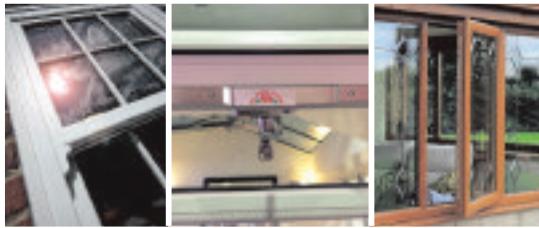


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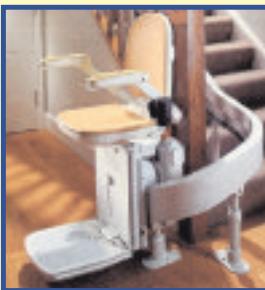
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Sweeping through the silence

Ambleside History Society

CHAIRMAN Pat Martin welcomed members to the final meeting of 2015 at the Ruskin Centre and the 12th Christmas party.

Pat then started off the 20 question quiz. Whilst teams conferred and wrote down their answers there was a general hush of concentration in the room until the loud exclamation of a shabby looking stranger broke the silence ... "where's my son, have you seen my son?" resonated around the room.

On closer inspection, the man could be identified as Stan Hawthorne the Ambleside chimney sweep who had been engaged to provide some light entertainment.

Stan had been sweeping chimneys for 42 years and he went on to tell amusing anecdotal tales of his experience, including how he had found quite a few things from dead ducks to trapped pigeons and more seasonally a letter to Santa from a young boy, Jonathon, who wanted a new bike and a book for Christmas - the well preserved letter was passed around the audience.

Pat thanked Stan, presenting an Ambleside History Society certificate as a formal record of his presentation.

She then made a presentation to Joyce Robins who was retiring from her position of treasurer, the Society bestowing upon her Lifetime Honorary Membership.

The prize for the winning photograph in the recently announced competition was in her absence awarded to Joan Kendrick.

Lodge confirmed as permanent home



Speaker Clive Garner, treasurer Sandra Chappell and Chairman, Mary Jones

Dudley South Ladies Luncheon Club

He had brought along a selection of items already completed if members wished to purchase them.

Ann Rogers was looking into the possibility of a visit to Himley Hall for a tour and afternoon tea and asked for help in finding parking for future coach outings.

The AGM is on Friday, February 12 and by speaker, by popular request will be John Sparry, on local characters.

In March the speaker will be local historian Chris Smith.

Moseley Old Hall talk topic

THERE was no business conducted at the December meeting as it incorporated the annual Christmas party.

Members enjoyed a buffet style meal organised by the committee, with the chairman Jean Latham overseeing the arrangements.

Approximately 70 people sat down, including members and visitors from

Wollaston E TWG

neighbouring guilds such as Kingswinford, Norton, Oldswinford, Grange and Federation.

The evening concluded with a raffle. The occasion was considered a success, and thanks on behalf of the visitors was given by Jean

Williams of Federation. The guild's choir performed carols at services at St Thomas' Church, Stourbridge, and at Cobden Street Methodist Church, Wollaston. Both occasions were well attended.

Meetings are at St James' Church Hall, Wollaston.

January began with Malcolm Astley giving a talk on Moseley Old Hall.

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Hammer terror as shop raid is caught on camera

THIS is the moment masked men burst into a petrol station shop, putting two women shop assistants in fear for their lives.

One of the raiders, 26-year-old Ashley Fay, from Dudley, leapt on the counter armed with a claw hammer and shouted repeatedly for the location of a safe.

One of the women suffered a broken arm when she was pushed to the floor by Fay when she tried to escape.

Shrewsbury Crown Court was told that the other woman thought the men were going to kill her.

Fay and one of his accomplices, 36-year-old Stephen Dale, from Tipton, are now in jail after admitting their roles in the robbery at the Wheatland petrol station in Much Wenlock, near Telford.

Dale, who was not in possession of a hammer, also jumped over the counter during the raid at 9.40pm on September 27, 2014.

Another man, who has not been identified, was also seen brandishing a hammer.

Ran

The men took £466.03 in cash and £293.67 worth of cigarettes.

Mr Charles Crinion, prosecuting, said while they were taking the items the two assistants attempted to run away but Fay ran after them. He pushed one of them to the floor. The victim suffered a broken arm requiring surgery which has left her without the full range of movement.

The court was told that the pair had been identified when police found Dale's finger prints on a roll of black bags in a stolen VW Golf used in the robbery. Police also found a glove with DNA matching Fay in the car.

Sentencing the pair last week, Re-



Two of the three masked raiders were brandishing hammers during the raid



Stephen Dale – jailed for 44 months

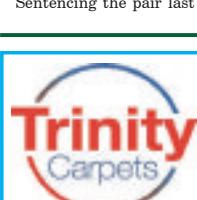


Ashley Fay – leapt on to the counter during the robbery. Recorder Daly also heard that Dale has 37 convictions.

Mr Graham Arnold, for Fay and Dale, said that both men were now looking to turn their lives around. He described Fay as remorseful and Dale as someone who wants to start his life again.

Fay, of Hillside Road, Pensnett, was jailed for 59 months. Dale, of Bernard Road, was jailed for 44 months.

Fay was said to have a number of previous convictions for car theft and



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Zeppelin memorial to be unveiled in Tipton

A PLAQUE commemorating the 1916 Zeppelin bombing raid on Tipton is to be unveiled later this month.

Tipton Civic Society is planning a ceremony at the premises of H C Pullinger in Union Street on Sunday, January 31 – the actual 100th anniversary – at 3pm.

The society is hoping that people related to the 14 local people who died in the raid will attend.

A talk by local historian Derek Nicholls on the raid is also being given on January 26 at Tipton Conservative Club, Union Street, at 7.30pm.

Tipton Library will also be hosting a Zeppelin Day on Saturday, January 30, with a talk from Mr Nicholls at 11am. Numbers are limited and people wishing to attend should call the library on 0121 557 1796 to reserve seats.

The Black Country was targeted by mistake as the German airship pilot mistook Wednesbury for Merseyside with 33 people killed in total. Bombs first hit Union Street in Tipton at around 8pm, with around five falling in the area.

Demolished

One also fell outside Tipton railway station and more around Barnfield Road trading estate. In Union Street, two houses were demolished and others damaged and the gas main was set alight.

Wednesbury Road Congregational Church in Walsall was also badly damaged. There would have been no blackout procedures in place as the concept of strategic air raids were practically unheard of at that time.

While the advances in aviation had brought many benefits, they also meant that towns and cities in the centre of Britain were vulnerable to attack in a way they had never been before. The L19 Zeppelin was later found in



A scene of carnage from the raids in the Black Country in 1916

the North Sea, having crashed off the coast at Grimsby. It had started dropping its own bombs after L21 and although no-one was killed, significant damage was caused.

Over the years, witnesses have told of their memories of that terrifying night of the Black Country raids. Edna Smith, who was a four-year-old living in Walsall at the time of the carnage, said: "It was very noisy, like a grinding noise."

"I was by the side of my mother, the people in the distance were just looking up, they weren't chatting about it, they didn't even seem to be worried. I didn't think much about it at the time, but we learned the next day that it had bombed a church."

"We went along to the church, and on the table were quite a few books

that were for sale, including a Bible, and my mother bought it for me."

At the time, the Express & Star reported that 26 people had been killed instantly during the night, but Mr Nicholls says the death toll was significantly higher.

An inquest was held jointly for 13 of the victims of the Tipton bombing on February 3.

The 14th, Louise York, who worked as nurse, had been taken for treatment at Dudley Guest Hospital and her inquest was separated.

The ruling from the inquest on the death certificates stated the following: Wilful murder against the Kaiser of Germany and his son, the Crown Prince, as being accessory to and after the fact at the insistence of the inquest jury.

Zoo chimps are not tyred of monkeying around yet

IT'S fair to say the chimps at Dudley Zoo won't be getting 'tyred' of their latest presents any time soon.

The playful primates have been given the old tyres off the attraction's land train to play with.

Dudley Zoo's popular locomotive, called Dotto, has been so popular with visitors over the busy festive period that it has needed a new set of tyres for 2016.

Rather than simply throwing the old tyres away, staff decided to send them to the chimp house where they knew they would be an instant hit.

The new tyres for the train have been fitted by Dudley Zoo's site service manager, Malcolm Clements.

He said: "The tyres we use on the train are stronger than your average car tyre, as it's quite a difficult path that it has to cope with, which is steep and bendy — not your average

course for a (land) train of this type. "The tyres are bigger than average too, similar to tractor tyres, and can't be bought off the shelf, so we have to order them in locally."

He added: "We change them regularly so are always testing different compounds to find which type works best, but we've always got two sets on site at all times, just because they're not readily available."

The tyres will make ideal sturdy toys for the chimps, or could even provide a comfortable place for the chimps to snooze.

The zoo currently has seven chimpanzees on site and they are called Mandy, Fanny, Barbie, Malaika, Binti, Mali and Baniqa.

For more information on the Castle Hill Zoo and its attractions, visit www.dudleyzoo.org.uk.



Tyred out — one of Dudley Zoo's chimpanzees has a rest on an old tyre from the attraction's land train

£980k is spent on stubbing out habit

MORE than £980,000 has been spent in one year helping nearly two thousand smokers across Dudley kick the habit, figures show.

Up to £520 was spent on each smoker aiming to quit in Dudley during the 12-month period.

In Dudley there were 1,887 successful quitters and the total spend was £980,345.

Health boss Councillor Rachel Harris said: "Smoking causes more preventable deaths than anything else and treating smoking related diseases is estimated to cost the NHS in Dudley £12.2m and the NHS nationally £2 billion each year."

"The Dudley Stop Smoking Service offers cost-effective, high-quality, evidence-based stop smoking interventions. These are delivered by specialist advisors who provide expert advice, support and encouragement to help local people stop smoking for good."

She added: "I'm proud of the success achieved by this service in Dudley. Supporting people to quit for good not only rapidly benefits their own health but also that of those around them."

Sex crime victims face a wait for counselling

VICTIMS of sexual violence are having to wait up to nine months to speak to a counsellor about their ordeal.

The number of victims referred to support services in the West Midlands has doubled to more than 5,000 a year since 2010.

The wait has been exposed by West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson who has vowed to slash waiting times in half.

Alethea Fuller, who oversees victim support at the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, said support services were struggling to cope with demand.

She said: "West Midlands data indicates that as a result of the increase in demand, specialist agencies are experiencing pressure on existing services as volume increases by up to a quarter in the last year."

Risk

"As victims come forward, good-quality, safe services are needed to act quickly and appropriately if they are not to be put at greater risk."

"The Independent Sexual Violence Advisor service offers support that is required, they can refer victims for counselling, assess needs and decide what type of support is required."

"The increasing demand on specialist sexual violence services has resulted in significantly longer waiting lists for counselling, currently between six to nine months for all specialist agencies across the region."

Mr Jamieson's office took over responsibility for victim support last April.

Candle oil garage destroyed by fire

A GARAGE storing scented candle oils in Halesowen was destroyed when a fire broke out.

Fire crews from Oldbury and Haden Hill were called to the property in Hurst Green.

Six firefighters fought the flames for an hour and eventually put it out at 9.30pm on January 12.

Oldbury Fire Station tweeted that its fire crew had literally come out 'smelling of roses' after returning from the incident.

Matthew Smith, spokesman for West Midlands Fire Service, said: "The garage, which was about six metres by eight metres, was completely destroyed by fire."

"Six firefighters with breathing apparatus used two reel hoses and one main hose."

"The fire started when a naked flame spread to barrels containing candle oil, which was being stored in the garage."



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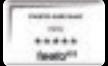
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More than 4,000 on bike courses

MORE than 4,000 people have taken bicycle training and maintenance courses since they were launched two years ago.

Organisers are now urging more people to get involved as part of a campaign to reduce congestion on the roads. It is part of a programme, run by Centro, part of the West Midlands Integrated Transport Authority.

The programme has already promoted cycling in the Black Country through the 'Boston Bikes' scheme. This gave people the chance to try out new bikes with the option of buying them at a discount after training.

Councillor Judith Rowley, lead for fair and safe transport on the West Midlands Transport Delivery Committee, said: "We've had a great response with cycling in this area. As well as the health benefits for people, there are real rewards in cutting traffic congestion and carbon emissions."

Find out more at www.mynetwork.org.uk/blackcountry and there will be flyers delivered to homes during February.

It's a relief that trouble pub is shut, say nearby residents

THE decision to close a pub in Dudley which has been plagued by violence has been welcomed.

Nearby business owners and residents have spoken after the The Earl of Dudley Arms, in Wellington Road, was shut down by police until the end of March.

The pub was closed by senior officers after police were called to the premises more than 60 times over the last two years, with the premises being described as a hotbed for serious crime involving gangs.

Incidents including wounding and

robbery were listed among crimes reported at the pub and in December a man was badly beaten, police said the owners had failed to protect customers by 'allowing members local gangs to frequent the premises'.

Dudley's Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: "Public safety is of paramount importance and reading reports of what's been going on at the pub, it's fair to say I feel pleased it has been closed if such incidents are true.

"It is quite shocking people have been put at such risk and as a ward councillor, my main concern is the protection of their health and safety.

"We now have a three-month period

to work together to resolve this issue, but nothing should jeopardise the safety of the public."

A nearby business owner, who did not wish to be named, said: "It's been a big problem for everyone in this area and I feel the safety of local people has been put at risk. It's a relief that this notice has been served."

A resident of 20 years, who also did not want to be named, said she 'avoided the pub at all costs'.

The pub was shut down at the end of December and will remain closed until the end of March after a closure notice was granted at Wolverhampton Magistrates Court.



The Earl of Dudley Arms

MP's backing for governors

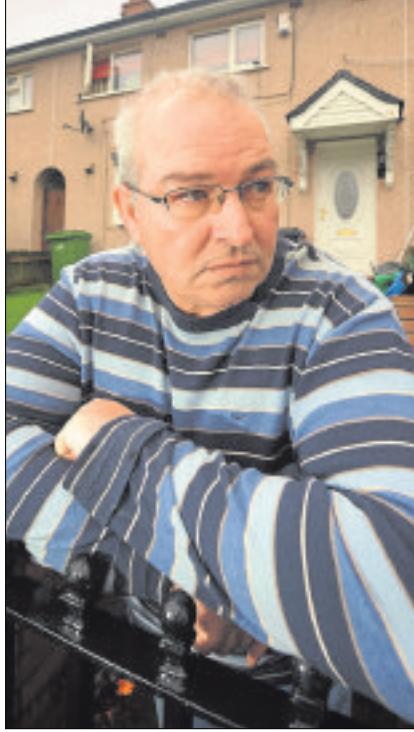
DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin has joined a group promoting the role of school governors in turning schools around.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Education Governance and Leadership aims to get more people involved in schools. Mr Austin wants education to be made the number one priority in the Black Country.

He said: "Getting people involved in their local schools as school governors is an important way of making schools accountable to local people and driving up standards."

"Local schools like Ellowes Hall, Dormston and Priory Primary are brilliant examples of how well schools can perform if governors, parents and the whole community get behind heads and teachers working hard to make improvements."

Terror for family as car 'petrol bombed'



Worried Rik Freeman, of Dudley, is moving his family out

TRUCK driver Rik Freeman is moving out of his home in Willow Road, Dudley, after his car was petrol bombed.

He said he had been targeted by yobs two years ago, who had slashed his and wife Tracey's tyres on several occasions. The incidents stopped after he installed CCTV cameras a year ago, until the the early hours of Saturday morning when his daughter Demi-Leigh was woken up by a flash. A hooded arsonist was seen on camera running away after the hatchback was set ablaze shortly before 3.30am.

Mr Freeman, 50, who described himself as a 'hard grafta' who gets on with everyone, said he had no idea why they were being targeted.

Anyone with information should call police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Man took his own life after losing job

A MAN who was found dead in undergrowth at a park committed suicide after being made redundant from his job, an inquest heard. Russell Baker had been looking for work for around a month since losing his job as a machine operator last month.

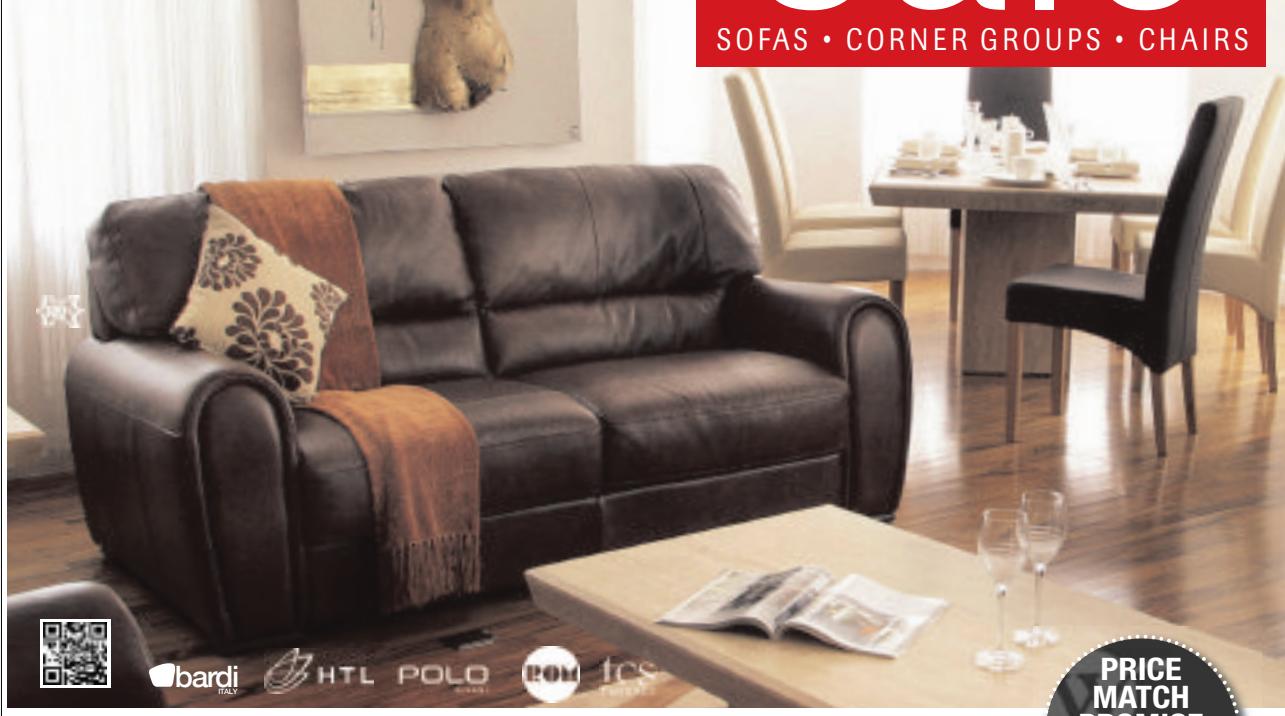
Mr Baker, who was in his 50s, and lived in Spring Avenue, Rowley Regis, told his wife Paula that he was planning to hand deliver his CV to businesses when he left the house on January 5 this year. He was reported missing by his wife later that day with police officers conducting an extensive overnight search.

His body was a found at Warren Hall Park a day later, on January 6, after police tracked the location of his mobile phone. A post-mortem carried out by pathologist Dr Suhal Muzaffar concluded that Mr Baker died from asphyxiation due to suicidal strangulation.

In an inquest at Smethwick Council House, senior coroner for the Black Country, Zafar Siddique, concluded that Mr Baker took his own life and gave a verdict of suicide. He said: "I would like to pass my heartfelt condolences onto the family and friends of Mr Russell Baker at this difficult time."

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Taylor leads the linesman onto the pitch for the 74 World Cup Final in Munich



Trying to keep control over German and Dutch players



Taylor awards a penalty to Holland in the first minute of the World Cup Final



Jack Taylor in action



Jack Taylor in later years

Taylor-made to be a success

WORLD CUP FINAL referee Jack Taylor has become the latest Wolverhampton legend to be immortalised with his own biography.

The late Mr Taylor took charge of the 1974 final between West Germany and Holland and is among 222 people making their debut in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB).

He joins fellow famous Wulfrunians including Wolves and England defender Billy Wright, Wolves' most successful manager Stan Cullis and late Wolverhampton MP Enoch Powell in the list.

"It is a wonderful tribute," his widow Sue said. "I'm delighted that he is still remembered. He would be so honoured. Jack was a very modest man."

"He had such phenomenal success yet it never went to his head. He thoroughly enjoyed what he did, and he knew he did it well."

Mr Taylor's entry in the ODNB opens by saying that he left school at 14 after failing his 11 pluses.

"Living above his father's butcher's shop, it was probably assumed that he would go into the business, although as a young man he was keen on horses with thoughts of becoming a trader," the biography continues.

"In the event, he did work in the shop, but it was

MEMORY LANE

By Nick Humphreys

football at the weekends that became a central life interest."

The progress of Mr Taylor was 'extraordinary' according to the ODNB. He was only 31 years of age when he refereed the FA Amateur Cup final between Crook Town and Hounslow Town in 1962.

In 1966, he refereed the FA Cup final between Everton and Sheffield Wednesday at Wembley, and then took charge of the 1971 European Cup final, between Ajax and Panathinaikos.

Three years later he was the man in the middle for the World Cup Final, awarding two penalties.

He received the OBE for services to football in 1975. Not bad for the lad from Staveley Road.

Once when Mr Taylor refereed a match at Luton Town, his face was cut when a fan threw a penny at him.

Legend has it that after the match, comedian and Luton fan Eric Morecambe went to see him to make sure that he was alright, and also to check that he wasn't going to report Luton for the incident.

When Mr Taylor confirmed that he wouldn't be reporting the matter, Morecambe replied: "Good, now can I have my penny back?"

Mr Taylor later became commercial director at Wolves and was also a Wolverhampton magistrate for 25 years. He was inducted into the FIFA Hall of Fame in 1999 and in 2013 became the first referee inducted into the English Football Hall of Fame.

He was 82 when he died of pneumonia at his home at Shifnal in July 2012.

Former referee Alex Hamil met Mr Taylor in the late 1950s when he was a young up and coming referee in the Wolverhampton leagues.

"Jack was already a football league referee by then," said Mr Hamil, 80, from from Ettingshall Park. "He took me under his wing and was always there to offer help and support."

"Jack didn't have an enemy in the world. He was loved and respected wherever he went. He produced some wonderful pieces of refereeing. But even when he was at the very top he never forgot his roots. He was a proud Wolverhampton man."

Mr Hamil recalls an incident during a Football League Referees Alliance meeting that he says sums up his old friend. "One of the national newspapers wanted to run a contest to vote on the best referee in the country," he said.

"Jack stood up and said he was completely against it, arguing that we shouldn't start picking out referees as we were all in it together."

"Everyone was shocked because we all knew there would only have been one winner....Jack!"

"He didn't care about the personal accolades. That was his nature."

Wolves club historian John Hendley said Mr Taylor's latest honour was richly deserved.

"He was always renowned by the players as one of the best in the game," Mr Hartley said.

"If the players think you are the best then you must be pretty good, and it came from the best players in the world."

In the World Cup Final that he refereed, he showed no fear in awarding the penalty in the first minute or booking the German captain. Both penalties he awarded were the right decisions.

"He also booked Johann Cruyff in that game. Cruyff didn't know that a Dutch linesman had taught Jack some Dutch swear words, so when Cruyff was swearing at him he knew exactly what he was saying.

"He was a very quiet man, a decent man."

"Jack was respected by everyone in Wolverhampton and this award is fully deserved."

"He was in it for the love of the game, not the money. He loved the game and loved it to be played properly."

He added: "At Molineux, the referee's room is named the Jack Taylor Room. It gives visiting referees something to aspire to."

"If they could become half as good as Jack was, they wouldn't be a bad referee."

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Bid to get booze licence back fails

BOSSES of a shop in Tividale have failed in an effort to regain a licence to sell alcohol after concerns were raised by police and trading standards.

Lifestyle Express in Tividale Road was stripped of its licence last year after non-duty paid alcohol was seized from the premises. Alcohol had also been sold to a youth three years earlier. Even after the licence had been revoked, alcohol was found being displayed for sale in the shop.

Nargus Bedum, who has taken over the business, said the shop had been hit hard by not being able to sell alcohol and also claimed she had not been involved with the business since 2010.

But police and trading standards said they were not convinced there had been enough of a 'divorce' from the previous regime.

West Midlands Police licensing officer Mick Boyd said he believed the application was nothing more than a 'ploy'.

Rail police take on more staff after 388,000 calls and texts

MORE than 370,000 calls and 18,000 texts were logged with British Transport Police, prompting a recruitment drive to help meet demand.

Extra call handlers are needed for the Birmingham contact centre, which deals with non-emergency calls from train passengers and railway staff.

Eleven jobs will be up for grabs to begin with, although more are set to follow in the coming months.

The new workers will join the existing 59 call handlers in the Birmingham control room.

It follows the launch of the 61016 text number in 2013 which has led to a surge in the number

of messages and information being logged with the service.

Calls handlers also keep an eye on Twitter and respond to queries posted on social media.

People can report incidents that have already happened, such as thefts, or passengers can report issues affecting their rail journey or their local station.

The contact centre operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and the call handlers are the first point of contact for both the public and train operating companies.

Force contact manager Tony Taylor said: "We recognise the way people want to communicate with us is changing and no other force control room in the country uses text or social media to the extent we do."

"Because of our pioneering approach, our Birmingham contact centre needs committed and customer-focused people to join our teams of call handlers and help us manage our teams for service."

"The number of people using our 61016 text number to contact us has grown significantly since its introduction in 2013. "Last year, there was a 145 per cent increase in the number of texts we received."

"Passengers are advised however that when a crime is happening, someone suspected of a crime is nearby or someone is injured, being threatened or in danger, they should not use the non-emergency number and instead call 999."

To apply for one of the new roles visit <http://btppne.ws/callhandlers>

Officers act over gangs of youths

YOUNG who have been disturbing people visiting shops on two housing estates in Dudley have sparked a police crackdown.

People complained that groups of youths had been hanging around the shops on the Wrens Nest and Old Park Farm estates.

Police have stepped up patrols in a bid to curb the problem and move groups on.

Details of the youths will be taken by officers and then home visits conducted to inform parents of concerns.

Neighbourhood officers say if problems still persist then a dispersal order can be used to break up the gatherings of young people.

The police crackdown is part of action across the Black Country to deter youths from gathering in large numbers, causing a nuisance or intimidating the public.

Hole lot of bother for residents



Resident Richard Lowe is unhappy with the unexpected works in Orchard Road

RESIDENTS have been left without gas or electricity, some with stranded cars, after workers began digging unannounced in their street.

Work by National Grid began in Orchard Road, Dudley Wood, last week to the surprise of residents.

The company said the work been scheduled for last June but the works had been delayed until this month.

National Grid admitted it had failed to inform residents of the new date and has apologised after houses were left with no water, gas or electricity. Some residents have not been able to move their cars as deep holes have been dug directly outside drives.

Richard Lowe was dismayed by the lack of notice. He said: "I've had everything switched off, electricity, gas, water, heating — this is not on at all. The potholes are ab-

solutely huge. It's a narrow enough street as it is without having gigantic holes.

"We should have been notified and kept updated by National Grid. It's unbelievable to think they've just turned up without warning and began digging away."

National Grid spokesperson Jane Taylor said: "Work was meant to begin on replacing the gas mains at Orchard Road in June 2015, where we did send out letters to residents to forewarn them.

"Unfortunately we had to reschedule the date of this work to early this year and I believe no new letters were sent out telling residents of the updated plans.

"I sincerely apologise to people living in the street who have been inconvenienced but it is necessary work. We aim to be as swift as possible and have the gas mains replaced within the next four."

Country star on way to sing at Glee Club

GRAMMY award-winning country singer Patty Griffin is in concert at Birmingham Glee Club on Sunday.

The Texas-based songstress won the Grammy for her 2010 album *Downtown Church* and her most recent album, *Servant of Love*, was released last year.

Griffin, who has a nine album back catalogue, was also featured on Robert Plant's Band of Joy album and toured with the former Led Zeppelin singer.

Support at the Arcadian centre venue comes from Mississippi-born Frankie Lee. Tickets cost £20. Doors open 7pm. There is more country music at the same venue on Wednesday, January 27, with Texan singer-songwriter Aaron Watson, who last year released his 12th album *The Underdog*. He will be joined by California-based Sam Outlaw who has just released his debut album *Angeleno*. Tickets cost £15.

See the club's website for further details.

Play return by demand

OF Mice and Men is returning to Birmingham Repertory Theatre from February 4 to 13 by popular demand.

The play from the John Steinbeck novel is about farm workers in the US during the Great Depression and is directed by Rep artistic director Roxana Silbert.

It was a success at the Centenary Square theatre in 2014 and returns with a new cast including William Rodell, Kristian Phillips and stage and TV veteran Dudley Sutton. Tickets from £13.50 on 0121 236 4455.

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Guide dog Natalie shows MP the way for charity



Dudley North MP Ian Austin takes a blind-folded walk in Dudley town centre with guide dog Natalie and team leader Andy Guiel

DUDLEY North MP Ian Austin took to the streets blind-folded to promote the work of the Beacon Centre for the Blind.

Mr Austin, who has joined a new Parliamentary group on sight loss and blindness. The Dudley Labour MP has joined it to help promote the Beacon Centre for the Blind in Sedgley, which provides specialist services and support for people with visual impairment.

Mr Austin has previously backed campaigns by the national Guide Dogs for the charity to improve blind people's access to support and services.

Experience

He said: "It was an unbelievable experience. I think everybody should do this."

"You've got no idea what's around, what the obstacles are, where the traffic is, if there's something outside the shop. It's indescribable."

"People involved in planning town centres should do this before they do the work."

He added: "The Beacon Centre for the Blind does brilliant work here in Dudley, so I will be working to promote them and speak up for local blind people."

Stourbridge MP Margot James also took part in a blind-folded walk to highlight the experiences a partially or fully blind person would have in a town. The Conservative MP said: "I was shocked at how different the experience made me feel."

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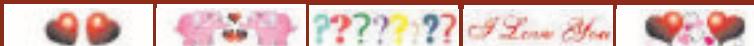
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Follow the yellow brick road — to Netherton



Janet Kirkham, Bethan Siviter-Coupland and Melissa Huband are the three witches in The Wizard of Oz

THE annual pantomime from a youthful group of performers is set to be another smash hit.

The Young Ones and Their Guests are putting the finishing touches to their performance of The Wizard of Oz.

The group is made up of a talented

group of seven to 18-year-olds. The first performance will be at Netherton Arts Centre on Saturday.

Director and choreographer Audrey Hepwood, who has been involved with the group for 30 years, said: "Cinderella, Aladdin and Sleeping Beauty are all great fun, but we've done them all over the years. We were looking for something a bit different.

"That's why we decided on The Wizard of Oz."

The show starts this Saturday and runs until the following Saturday, January 30.

Evening performances start at 7.15pm with matinee shows on the weekend begin at 2.30pm.

For ticket details call Chris Sykes on (01384) 895266. Tickets cost £9 or £10.

Rockers swagger back with style

ALBUMS

by Leon Burakowski

THE classic bluesy rock on White Bear, the second album from The Temperance Movement, further establishes this British band as torch bearers for honest no-nonsense rock.

Their music is in the swaggering tradition of The Black Crowes and AC/DC with nods to the reflective West Coast style of the likes of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young.

The band already have a reputation as a great live act and White Bear will add to their legion of fans, particularly thanks to full-throated Scottish frontman Phil Campbell.

They have already won The Rolling Stones' seal of approval, having been chosen to support the living legends on tour.

Highlights on White Bear include the stomping Three Bullets and the free-wheeling, expansive A Pleasant Peace I Feel.

Notorious

Check them out in concert at Birmingham's O2 Institute in Digbeth on Monday, January 25.

Notorious for unpleasant on-stage antics, it's a safe bet that **Fat White Family** aren't looking to become family favourites by name checking killer GP Doctor Shipman, Italian dictator Mussolini and Hitler's henchman Joseph Goebbels with tracks on second album **Songs For Our Mothers**.

Their sound is so slippery it's hard to pin down, which isn't a bad thing. Safe to say, if you enjoy the loose grooves of The Happy Mondays and/or the intensity of John Lydon's PIL, this



Bear necessities — The Temperance Movement Picture by Rob Blackham

ramshackle bunch are certainly worth listening to.

I suspect that with a little more focus Songs For Our Mothers could have been an exceptional album. There are more than a few hints of that amid all the frazzled strangeness.

It begins with the relentless Krautrock rhythm of Whistey Boy On The Beach, takes it to another woozy level on Satisfied, and reaches its zenith with Duce — imagine some mad jam involving The Yardbirds, the Glitter Band and chanting Gregorian monks.

The delivery of lyrics range from whispers to screams with chants in between, and are mostly indistinct, which is perhaps a good thing given the band's desire to shock. But the cumulative effect is wonky, weird and overwhelming.

You can catch Fat White Family live

when they kick off their latest tour at Birmingham's O2 Institute on February 20 — don't say I didn't warn you.

Nearly three years on from the debut album by **Wild Savages**, Silence Yourself, **Adore Life** finds the London-based black-clad female band perfecting their spiky goth/punk sound, which recalls the likes of Penetration and Siouxsie and the Banshees, with a theme that often returns to sexual politics.

Lead singer Jehnny Beth has a stentorian tone but also reveals a more vulnerable side on Adore and Slowing Down The World.

But if you want pure punk attitude, it doesn't come much more withering than the put-down I Need Something New. When In Love is a stand-out track with its questing lyric and incendiary passion whilst Mechanics makes for a dark, apocalyptic closure.

Geological gems are in bid for global status



Once a coral reef in a tropical sea, Wren's Nest is an important geological site due to its huge range of fossils

A BID has been made to have the Black Country's hidden geological gems officially recognised worldwide.

If successful, the Black Country will be granted Global Geopark status and join a network of places of natural beauty, encompassing countries as diverse as Australia, Brazil, China, Austria, Malaysia and Italy.

The Black Country's application has now been submitted to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.

Two sites highlighted in the bid include Dudley's Wren's Nest National Nature Reserve, where the cliffs are covered in vertical ripple beds which once lay under the sea, and is home to 700 different fossils — 86 of which cannot be found anywhere else in the world.

Armada

Another example is Barr Beacon Local Nature Reserve, one of the original beacon sites that warned off the approaching Spanish fleet the Armada, when England was threatened with invasion by Catholic Spain in the Elizabethan era.

Barr Beacon has a quarry that provided much of the sand and gravel that built Birmingham and is scarred by a deep valley created at the end of the last Ice Age, 20,000 years ago.

There are 109 Global Geoparks in the world, ranging from Torbay and the Scottish Highlands in the UK, to volcanic sites in Iceland and Japan.

Council chiefs say it will boost the local economy and will provide a host of new opportunities for learning.

A scrutiny visit from UNESCO and the Global Geopark Network is expected during spring or summer and the final outcome of the application will be announced in the autumn.

The Black Country's application has now been submitted to United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.



Salsa dancer Norma's new smile would get a 'ten from Len'

Norma Aston — all my confidence is back

A PICTURE snapped at a dance group's farewell party to mark a friend's departure to Jamaica showed more than what vivacious Norma Aston was expecting.

As the well-wishes were made and memorable dancing stories exchanged amongst members of the Uksalsaafet classes at Willenhall's Chart Centre, the cameras and smart phones did their work.

But a single profile shot of Norma captured a different story to all the other photographs taken at that event.

"My teeth had been troublesome for years,

but when I saw the photo and realised just how far forward my top teeth had moved I knew I had to get something done. It was a turning point for me," recalls Norma of Willenhall.

The youthful 60-something-year-old salsa enthusiast, who attends classes every Saturday to help perfect her technique in this pastime made popular by programmes like Strictly Come Dancing, adds: "There were a number of things that came together which encouraged me to get things sorted.

"I had seen an article in my local paper about a woman, Ann [Skitt], who attends the same gym as myself at the centre. I was

impressed how problems with her teeth were resolved."

Ann, a patient of Denture Clinic principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng), suffered with an ill-fitting, lower denture and a long-standing issue was fixed with an implant-retained prosthetic.

Adds Norma: "I knew what I wanted and was already in my mind going down the implant denture route.

"At the same time, my step-daughter was encouraging me to see her implant dentist, the well-respected Dr Owain Rees."

"I asked my regular dentist to refer me to Steven and a consultation was arranged. Dental work is such a visual thing and unlike hospital surgical work we get to choose who undertakes it.

"It was so important for me that I made the correct choice."

Enthusiastic

Husband Don, a former design engineer and dance band frontman, who met Norma 32 years ago while playing at the Corpus Christi Centre, Wednesfield, takes up the story: "We'd done some research, but websites can really say anything and it's not the same as getting an impression face to face. When we saw Steven, he was so enthusiastic about his work and instilled

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dentistry. Norma's treatment plan included intravenous sedation, the placing of six lower implants to support a removable overdenture and a traditional upper denture prescription. The former City Hospital accounts manager, says: "Knowing that Owain was going to do the surgery was great."

"He explained everything and I embraced the treatment plan."

"I'd always cared for my teeth, but I have a family history of gum problems and for more than 20 years I'd had a partial denture. I never realised it didn't fit properly until I saw Steven. I'd just grown into it."

"My new teeth ... I couldn't ask for more and I'm amazed at the difference. They look so natural," she adds. Don agrees her new smile is "stunning."

Confidence is back

Norma enjoys a hectic lifestyle juggling dancing with personal commitments and volunteer stints at the Locksmith's House, Willenhall, a well-preserved piece of living Victorian history.

"I love working there and Don helps too. I used to be self-conscious of my smile when meeting people and was always careful how I smiled. Now I have all my confidence back and my only regret is that I didn't get my teeth sorted out three years ago."

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Rocky Horror Show is back – see page 25



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2

Return of Rocky's raunchy musical



Do the time warp again with those naughty s-extraterrestrials when *The Rocky Horror Show* arrives in Birmingham

SINCE its first appearance at London's Royal Court Theatre in June 1973, Richard O'Brien's *The Rocky Horror Show* has become the world's favourite rock 'n' roll musical.

It has been performed for over 40 years and has been translated into more than 20 languages, as well as becoming a cult movie.

Director Christopher Luscombe created a new production to celebrate

the 40th anniversary and this version of the show is back by popular demand, embarking on a year-long national tour including a stint at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Monday to Saturday.

X Factor finalist and chart-topper Diana Vickers will star in the role of Janet Weiss, opposite Emmerdale actor Ben Freeman as Brad Majors. S Club 7 star Paul Cattermole will join

them as rocker Eddie and Dr Scott. West End star Liam Tamne, who shot to fame on *The Voice*, has been cast as transsexual alien icon Frank N Furter.

Following over 900 performances of the 40th anniversary tour, Kristian Lavercombe returns as Riff Raff.

The musical extravaganza features classic songs including *Science Fiction/Double Feature*, *Dammit Janet* and, of course, *The Time-Warp*.



Double double toil and trouble

ACTORS John Heffernan and Anna Maxwell Martin will star as the most famous power couple in drama in an ambitious and highly physical new staging of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, at Birmingham Repertory Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday.

Scottish nobleman Macbeth, inspired by the prophecy of three witches, embarks on a murderous journey of power, treachery and paranoia in his bid to gain the Scottish throne, encouraged by his ambitious wife.

Maxwell Martin (pictured left as Lady Macbeth) is a twice Bafta award winning actress, for *Bleak House* and *Poppy Shakespeare*, also known for *Death Comes to Pemberley*. She was most recently seen on TV screens in *The Frankenstein Chronicles*, *Midwinter of the Spirit* and the BBC's Christmas whodunnit *And Then There Were None*.

Luther

Heffernan, who plays Macbeth, is one of this country's leading stage actors with the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company. He has also recently been seen on screen in *Dickensian* and *Luther*.

The production has been directed by Carrie Cracknell and choreographer Lucy Guerin, who also collaborated on the National Theatre's acclaimed production of *Medea*.

The Rep will stage several Shakespeare plays this year, including *Twelfth Night* and *King Lear*, to mark the 400th anniversary of his death. See www.birmingham-rep.co.uk

Strictly fabulous as celebs keep dancing

THE Strictly Come Dancing Live Tour returns to Birmingham for a fab-ulous ninth year.

Leading the pack will be this year's Glitter Ball winner Jay McGuiness, from boyband The Wanted. He will be partnered again by professional Aliona Vilani, who has announced that she is quitting the BBC TV show.

Other celebrities booked in for the three-day Birmingham run from tomorrow (Fri) to Sunday are Georgia May Foote, Helen George, Frankie Bridge, Ainsley Harriott, Anita Rani, and Jake Wood. They will be joining the 2016 tour host Mel Giedroyc, together with judges Len Goodman, Craig Revel Horwood and Bruno Tonioli.

Picasso show for family audiences

AN INTERACTIVE theatre show that offers audience members a chance to make art is being staged in Wolverhampton.

The Boy Who Bit Picasso is at Newhampton Arts Centre, Dunkley Street, on Saturday at 2.30pm. There will be performances for schools the day before. The show by Untied Artists and Oxford Playhouse brings artist Antony Penrose's children's book to life and combines storytelling, music and art. It tells the true tale of how a young boy - Penrose himself - became friends with the great Spanish artist.

Tickets are £5 for adults and £4 for children on 01902 572090.

Singer puts back tour to the autumn

REBECCA Ferguson has rescheduled her *Lady Sings the Blues* tour, postponing her Birmingham concert for nearly ten months.

The X Factor finalist, who was runner-up to Matt Cardle in 2010, won fans for her husky vocals and was due to perform at the Symphony Hall on January 23. The third album by the 29-year-old Liverpudian features her versions of classic songs by jazz singer Billie Holiday. But the concert has now been moved to November 2.

Miss Ferguson said: "I have made the decision to change the dates for my tour and focus on getting the (new) album ready."

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MNA Media

CHOICE

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** James Martin: Home Comforts. **12.00** BBC News: Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **12.50** Saturday Sportsday. **1.00** Tennis: Australian Open. **2.00** The International Bowls: The World Indoor Championships. **4.30** Final Score. **5.10** You See It. **5.40** BBC News. **5.50** Regional Programme.

6.00 **Pointless Celebrities.** Soap stars Joe Swash and Joanne Altham, Nick Pickard and Ali Bastian, Victoria Bush and Zaraah Abrahams, and Sharon Maughan and Tina Hobley take part in the unorthodox quiz show.

6.50 **The Getaway Car.** Brothers Mitz and Dee, husband-and-wife duo Charlie and Kate, best friends Chloe and Bethany, sisters Val and Babs and new couple Joseph and Karen tackle the Getaway Car circuit.

7.45 **The Voice UK.** The spinning-chair singing contest continues, as Paloma Faith, Boy George, Will.i.am and Ricky Wilson appraise the talents of another round of hopeful stars in the third of seven "blind auditions". This week, Waterloo Road actor Tom Milner seeks to impress the coaches as he takes to the stage, and Irene Alano-Rhodes, the former star of Miss Saigon, displays her vocal skills. Dubliner Lauren Lapsley-Browne hopes her unique voice will make an impact, and eccentric rocker Billy Black's performance sparks a conflict on the panel. Plus, Brooke Waddle, the daughter of former England footballer Chris Waddle, also takes to the stage.

9.05 **Casually.** An office worker makes use of her stay in hospital to get her own back on her prankster colleague, and Noel mistakenly believes Big Mac saved him from a vicious mugger.

9.55 **The National Lottery Live.** Gaby Roslin presents as the all-important winning numbers are revealed.

10.05 BBC News: Weather.

10.25 **Match of the Day.** Highlights of the latest Premier League games; National Lottery Update.

11.55 **Film: Lara Croft: Tomb Raider – The Cradle of Life.** (2003) Action adventure sequel.

1.45 **Weather for the Week Ahead.** **1.50** BBC News.

1.50 **BBC News: Weather.**

1.55 **Match of the Day.** Highlights of the latest Premier League games; National Lottery Update.

2.15 **Film: Walkabout.** (1971) **2.15** **Film: East of Sudan.** (1964) **3.45** This Is BBC Two.

BBC2

6.05 **Race to Super Bowl 50.** (R) **6.55** **Film: Animal Farm.** (1954) **8.05** **Film: Bye Bye Birdie.** (1963) **9.55** **Film: Race to Witch Mountain.** (2009) **11.30** **Island Stories.** **12.00** James Martin: Home Comforts. **12.45** **James Martin: Home Comforts.** **1.30** **Film: Day of the Evil Gun.** (1968) Western, starring Glenn Ford. **3.00** **Film: 4 for Texas.** (1963) Comedy Western, starring Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra. **4.50** **Flog It!** (R) **5.50** **Victorian Bakers.** (R)

6.50 **Dad's Army.** Sergeant Wilson is appointed manager of the Eastgate branch of the bank. Comedy, starring John Le Mesurier. (R)

7.20 **Film: War Horse.** (2011) A farmer's son forms a close bond with a horse he buys, but is forced to give the animal up when it is sold to the British army during the First World War. The horse passes through various owners on both sides as he travels across the battlefields of France, while the boy refuses to give up on being reunited. Steven Spielberg's drama based on Michael Morpurgo's book, starring Jeremy Irvine.

9.35 **QI XL.** Panelists Julia Zemiro, Matt Lucas and David Mitchell and Alan Davies compete, as Stephen Fry hosts an extended edition of the comedy quiz show. In this edition, the host investigates on matters medical and macabre, and as usual, he poses questions that see difficult points are awarded for the answers he finds most interesting.

10.20 **Insert Name Here.** Jennifer Saunders, Romesh Ranganathan, Jessica Hynes and Suzanne Lipscomb join captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer questions about famous people who share a name. (R)

10.50 **live at the Apollo.** Mock the Week host Dara O Briain compiles an evening of stand-up at London's Hammersmith Apollo, performing himself and introducing routines by guests Zoe Lyons and Paul Chowdhry. (R)

11.35 **International Bowls.** The World Indoor Championships. Action from the semi-final matches in the Open Singles tournament, at the Potters Leisure Resort in Hopton-on-Sea, Norfolk.

12.35 **Film: Walkabout.** (1971) **2.15** **Film: East of Sudan.** (1964) **3.45** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 **CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge.** (R) **6.25** **Pat & Stan.** (R) **6.35** **Dino Dan.** (R) **6.45** **Dino Dan.** (R) **7.00** **Signed Stories: Share a Story.** (R) **7.05** **Sooty.** (R) **7.15** **Super 4.** (R) **7.30** **Scrambled!: Mr Potato.** (R) **7.45** **Scrambled!: Mr Potato.** (R) **7.50** **Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters.** **8.30** **Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go.** **9.05** **Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show.** (R) **9.25** **ITV News: 9.30 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **10.20** **The Jeremy Kyle Show USA.** **11.15** **The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **12.15** **ITV News: Weather.** **12.20** **The Jeremy Kyle Show.** (R) **12.25** **ITV News: Weather.** **12.30** **ITV News: Weather.**

6.30 **Regional Programme.** **6.45** **ITV News: Weather.** **6.50** **New You've Been Framed!** More comical mishaps submitted for approval by viewers.

7.00 **Ninja Warrior UK.** Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host the final heat, as competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage in the obstacle-course challenge.

8.00 **Take Me Out.** Paddy McGuinness invites four more men to try their hands at winning a date with one of his 30 single ladies. This time, the would-be suitors are James, a caravan salesman from Skegness, London-based fireman David, Milton Keynes plumber Sam and Al, an American car fanatic and musician. Each of the men enters the "love lift" in the hope of impressing 30 single women and winning a date – but must first get the female participants to keep their lights on as a sign of approval. Plus, Paddy gives viewers a chance to catch up with last week's couples on the Isle of Fernandos.

9.15 **The Jonathan Ross Show.** US actor John Krasinski, actress and comedienne Catherine Tate and Scottish stand-up star Kevin Bridges join Jonathan in the studio, and Rudimental perform live.

10.15 **ITV News: Weather.** **10.30** **Film: The Chronicles of Riddick.** (2004) Sci-fi adventure sequel, with Vin Diesel.

12.35 **Jackpot247.** **3.00** **Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **3.50** **ITV Nightscreen.**

CHANNEL 4

6.15 **How I Met Your Mother.** (R) **6.40** **The King of Queens.** (R) **7.05** **International Snowdon Race.** **8.00** **Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **8.30** **Everybody Loves Raymond.** (R) **9.00** **The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **9.30** **Frasier.** (R) **11.00** **The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **11.30** **The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.00** **The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.25** **The Simpsons.** (R) **1.30** **Channel 4 Racing.** Live coverage from Ascot and Haydock Park. **4.00** **Come Dine with Me.** (R) **4.30** **Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.00** **Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.35** **Come Dine with Me.** (R)

6.05 **Come Dine with Me.** It is the final day of the competition in Llanelli and teaching assistant Ainsley wants to educate her guests, while serving up an authentic Russian-themed dinner party. (R)

6.30 **Channel 4 News.**

7.00 **Great Canal Journeys.** Timothy West and Prunella Scales go in search of the lost route between London and the sea, which has not been fully open for over 200 years and requires four different boats to traverse now. They leave the Thames at Teddington and travel through the Surrey and Sussex countryside before arriving at Guildford, and a canal-side theatre where they have both regularly performed. The final leg of the trip brings them to the River Arun before reaching the English Channel. (R)

8.00 **The Girl Who Forgave the Nazis.** Documentary investigating the wider impact of Holocaust survivor Eva Kor's decision to forgive Oskar Schindler, the 93-year-old former Nazi who once worked as a clerk at Auschwitz.

9.00 **Film: Oblivion.** (2013) Premiere. A repairman is assigned to salvage the remaining resources from Earth, which has been left a devastated wasteland after a war with an alien race. He discovers a human survivor on the surface of the planet, an encounter that exposes secrets from the past that threaten the future of the human race. Sci-fi adventure, starring Tom Cruise and Morgan Freeman.

11.30 **Film: Priest.** (2011) Fantasy thriller, with Paul Bettany.

1.10 **Hollyoaks.** (R) **3.15** **Undercover Boss Canada.** (R) **4.05** **Phil Spencer: Secret Agent.** (R) **5.00** **Deal or No Deal.** (R) **5.50** **How I Met Your Mother.** (R)

12.00 **Super Casino.** **3.10** **Celebrity Big Brother.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 **Milkshake!** **8.55** **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.** (R) **9.30** **The Saturday Show.** **11.30** **Police Interceptors.** (R) **12.25** **Police Interceptors.** (R) **1.25** **Police Interceptors.** (R) **2.25** **Makes You Laugh Out Loud.** (R) **4.20** **Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud 2.** (R) **5.20** **News Weekend.** **5.25** **Nightmare Tenants.** **6.00** **Slum Landlords.**

6.20 **Ice Road Truckers.** Lisa and Todd venture onto a route that has not been used before, while a crash threatens to bring Alex's season to an end. (R)

7.05 **World War II in Colour.** This edition looks at Hitler's plans to push his forces into the Soviet Union, beginning with the launch of Operation Barbarossa in the summer of 1941. (R)

8.00 **World War II Battlefield Recovery.** A four-man team of excavation experts sets out to retrieve Second World War relics from the battlefields and war-zones of the Eastern Front, telling the stories of fallen soldiers by examining their remains.

9.00 **The Championship: Football League Tonight.** Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's matches in the second tier of English football, including Queens Park Rangers v Wolverhampton Wanderers at Loftus Road; Birmingham City v Ipswich Town at St Andrews; Bristol City v Hove Albion v Huddersfield Town at the Amex Stadium; and Leeds United v Bristol City at Elland Road.

10.00 **Goal Rush: Football League Tonight.** Kelly Cates and George Riley present all the goals from League One and League Two, where fixtures included Burton Albion v Shrewsbury Town and Bristol Rovers v Plymouth Argyle.

10.30 **Celebrity Big Brother.** Highlights of the famous housemates' past 24 hours under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, as they try to get used to living alongside one another.

11.30 **Lip Sync Battle UK: Rufus Hound v Jorgie Porter.** Melanie Brown and Professor Green present the musical game show as comedian Rufus Hound and actress Jorgie Porter go head to head lip-synching to a hit song. (R)

12.00 **Super Casino.** **3.10** **Celebrity Big Brother.** (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three

7.00 **Don't Tell the Bride.** **8.00** **Top Gear.** **9.05** **Film: Looper.** (2012) **10.55** **Russell Howard's Good News.** **11.25** **Family Guy.** **1.35** **Siblings.** **2.05** **Film: Tropic Thunder.** (2006) **3.45** **Glastonbury: The Udder Side.** **4.00** **Close.**

BBC Four

7.00 **Stories from the Dark Earth: Meet the Ancestors Revisited.** **8.00** **Shipwrecks: Britain's Sunken History.** **9.00** **The Young Montalbano.** **10.55** **Musical Moguls: Masters of Pop.** **11.55** **Duets at the BBC.** **12.55** **Danny Baker's Great Album Showdown.** **1.55** **Top of the Pops.** **2.20** **Sounds of the Eighties.** **3.50** **Close.**

ITV2

11.05 **Ninja Warrior UK.** **12.05** **Celebrity Catchphrase.** **1.05** **Scorpion.** **2.05** **Film: Small Soldiers.** (1998) **4.20** **Minion Madness.** **4.40** **Film: Hotel Transylvania.** (2012) **6.25** **Film: Jurassic Park III.** (2001) **8.15** **Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands.** **9.15** **Take Me Out – The Gossip.** **10.15** **Film: American Pie Presents: The Naked Mile.** (2006) **12.25** **Film: Not Another Bonkers.** **2.00** **Records.** **2.40** **Teleshopping.** **4.00** **ITV Nightscreen.**

ITV3

11.35 **A Touch of Frost.** **1.50** **The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.** **4.00** **Midsummer Murders.** **10.00** **Agatha Christie's Marple.** **12.00** **Marchlands.** **1.00** **The Return of Sherlock Holmes.** **2.00** **House.** **2.25** **ITV3 Nightscreen.** **2.30** **Teleshopping.**

ITV4

11.30 **Storage Wars: Texas.** **1.25** **Storage Wars.** **2.20** **Film: The Sting.** (1973) **5.00** **Film: Apache.** (1954) **6.50** **Film: The Hanging Tree.** (1959) **9.00** **Film: Last Man Standing.** (1996) **11.05** **Film: The Kingdom.** (2007) **1.20** **Inside Manchester City.** **2.15** **Ax Men.** **3.00** **Teleshopping.**

E4

11.30 **The Goldbergs: At the Movies.** (2009) **2.00** **Film: The Core.** (2003) **4.35** **The Big Bang Theory.** **9.00** **Film: This Means War.** (2012) **11.00** **Gogglebox.** **12.50** **Virtually Famous.** **1.40** **The Inbetweeners.** **2.45** **The IT Crowd.** **3.35** **Charmed.** **4.15** **Revenge.**

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CHOICE



James May

James May's Cars of the People (BBC2, 9pm)

New series. The former Top Gear presenter examines how the car industry in Germany and Japan blossomed following the Second World War, becoming manufacturing giants that far outstripped the Allied nations that had defeated them. He test drives some of the vehicles Germany and Japan produced during the post-war period, as well as an assortment of other classic cars, including E-Types and Mustangs. He also reveals the sad tale of the Austin Allegro, a vehicle that had a devastating impact on the British car industry.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.15** Flag Day (R) **3.00** The Truth About Superstition. **4.00** Regional Programme. **4.30** Songs of Praise. **5.05** BBC News. **5.20** Regional Programme. **5.30** Countryfile. **6.30** Afternoon & the Giant Dinosaur. The story of how more than 220 dinosaur bones were found in the Argentinean desert, which were found to have come from a previously undiscovered species, which is the largest land dwelling animal known to have existed. David Attenborough visits the archaeological dig and a laboratory where the remains are being cleaned and analysed with lead scientist Dr Diego Pol and evolutionary biologist Ben Garrod, and meets animators, model-makers, paleontologists and anatomy experts who are working to reconstruct what the 37 metre-long creature would have looked like. **7.30** Still Open All Hours. David Jason stars as Granville in this follow-up to Open All Hours, now running the shop with his son Leroy after inheriting the business from Arkwright. **8.00** Call the Midwife. Barbara faces the biggest test of her career, Nurse Crane learns to speak Spanish, and Sister Evangelina helps a woman with breastfeeding, leading to unforeseen consequences. **9.00** War & Peace. Natasha encounters temptation during Andrei's absence, Countess Rostova and Anna both try to find wealthy wives for their sons, and Pierre grows frustrated with married life. **10.00** BBC News. **10.20** Regional Programme. **10.30** Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the day's two Premier League fixtures, which were Arsenal v Chelsea and Everton v Swansea City at Goodison Park. **11.30** Film: Private Peaceful. (2012) Premiere. Drama based on Michael Morpurgo's novel, starring Jack O'Connell. **1.05** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.10** BBC News.

BBC2

6.30 The A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.15** Monty Don's Italian Gardens. (R) **8.15** Countryfile. **9.15** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **10.45** James Martin - Home Comforts at Christmas. (R) **11.30** Games Math: How to Win Sports. (R) **12.15** SUNDAY Extra. **1.00** Tennis: Australian Open Highlights. **2.00** Live International Beaches: The World Indoor Championships. **5.15** Ski Sunday. **6.00** Film: Real Steel. (2011) In the future, boxing matches between eight-foot robots are one of the world's biggest sporting draws. A washed-up human prizefighter finds an abandoned android and sets about restoring it to become a potential champion, a project that reunites him with his estranged 11-year-old son. Sci-fi drama, starring Hugh Jackman, Dakota Goyo and Evangeline Lilly. **6.00** Regional Programme: Weather. **6.15** ITV News: Weather. **6.30** Planet's Got Talent. New series. The best and worst clips from the global Got Talent franchise, featuring blindfolded sword-swallowing and a group of stuntmen crashing a bus. **7.00** Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands. A new leader is to be chosen as Herot faces being torn apart by civil war between the tribes, leaving Ræda faced with the possibility of fighting to remain in power. **8.00** Endeavour. The detective is approached by a former mentor from his college days, who asks Morse to ensure the safety of his wife. However, the assignment leaves him contemplating his future with the police force. Meanwhile, a murder in the world of fashion stirs up old gangland conflicts in the city. Shaun Evans stars. Last in the series. **10.00** ITV News: Weather. **10.15** The Day Hitler Died. Documentary exploring the fuhrer's final hours in his Berlin bunker as Russian forces closed in, featuring previously unseen interviews with eyewitnesses, recorded in 1948. **11.15** Perspectives: Bruce Forsyth on Sammy Davis Jr. The veteran entertainer explores the life and work of the US singer, dancer and actor. **12.15** Jackpot247. **3.00** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **6.00** Film: Private Peaceful. (2012) Premiere. Drama based on Michael Morpurgo's novel, starring Jack O'Connell. **1.05** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.10** BBC News.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.05** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.30** Scrambled: Mr Bear. (R) **7.45** Scrambled: Mr Bear. (R) **7.50** Scrambled: Mr Bear - The Animated Series. (R) **7.55** Scrambled: Horrid Henry. (R) **8.10** Scrambled: Nerds & Monsters. **8.30** Scrambled: Bear Grylls Survival School. **9.05** Scrambled: The Tom & Jerry Show. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.40** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.40** River Monsters. (R) **2.10** Ninja Warrior. (R) **3.15** Film: On Her Majesty's Secret Service. (1969) James Bond adventure, starring George Lazenby. **6.00** Regional Programme: Weather. **6.15** ITV News: Weather. **6.30** Planet's Got Talent. New series. The best and worst clips from the global Got Talent franchise, featuring blindfolded sword-swallowing and a group of stuntmen crashing a bus. **7.00** Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands. A new leader is to be chosen as Herot faces being torn apart by civil war between the tribes, leaving Ræda faced with the possibility of fighting to remain in power. **8.00** Endeavour. The detective is approached by a former mentor from his college days, who asks Morse to ensure the safety of his wife. However, the assignment leaves him contemplating his future with the police force. Meanwhile, a murder in the world of fashion stirs up old gangland conflicts in the city. Shaun Evans stars. Last in the series. **10.00** ITV News: Weather. **10.15** The Day Hitler Died. Documentary exploring the fuhrer's final hours in his Berlin bunker as Russian forces closed in, featuring previously unseen interviews with eyewitnesses, recorded in 1948. **11.15** Perspectives: Bruce Forsyth on Sammy Davis Jr. The veteran entertainer explores the life and work of the US singer, dancer and actor. **12.15** Jackpot247. **3.00** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **6.00** Film: Private Peaceful. (2012) Premiere. Drama based on Michael Morpurgo's novel, starring Jack O'Connell. **1.05** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.10** BBC News.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40** The King of Queens. (R) **7.05** The King of Queens. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.00** The Brassic. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **1.30** Location, Location, Location. (R) **2.35** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **3.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **3.30** The Simpsons. (R) **4.00** The Simpsons. (R) **4.30** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD. **5.30** Channel 4 News. **6.00** Film: Night at the Museum: Battle of the Smithsonian. (2009) The living exhibits at New York's Museum of Natural History are shipped to Washington's Smithsonian Institution - along with the artefact that brought them to life in the first place. Nightwatchman Larry tries to retrieve it, only to find the contents of the world's largest museum have been reanimated, including a pharaoh determined to take over the world. Fantasy comedy sequel, starring Ben Stiller. **8.00** Walking the Himalayas. Levison Wood and guide Binod Parayar face a 30-mile trek through the jungles of Eastern Nepal, with no roads and few people to tell them they're heading in the right direction. Their journey comes to an end in Bhutan, a country rarely visited by foreigners, where they visit a holy mountain, join the celebrations for the king's birthday, and listen to local children's tales of yeti. Last in the series. **9.00** Deutschland 83. The bug in Linda's desk is discovered, and Moritz is given two options - persuade the secretary to defect or kill her. Alex turns to Tischber following an argument with his father. **10.00** 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Sean Lock and Rob Beckett compete against Jon Richardson and Cariad Lloyd in the comedy panel show, while Sam Simmons helps out in Dictionary Corner. (R) **11.05** Film: 48 Hrs. (1982) A hard-bitten cop temporarily releases a fast-talking criminal from prison to help him track down two escaped fugitives. Comedy thriller, starring Nick Nolte and Eddie Murphy. **12.50** Embarrassing Bodies: Back to the Clinic. (R) **1.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.05** Undercover Boss USA. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.45** Ticky Toc. (R) **6.55** Zack and Quack. (R) **7.05** Postman Pat. (R) **7.25** Postman Pat. (R) **7.35** Little Princess. (R) **7.50** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.05** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.35** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.50** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **9.05** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.20** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.35** LazyTown. (R) **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** The Championship. (R) **11.30** Goal Rush: Football League Tonight. (R) **12.00** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.05** Film: Driftbit Taylor. (2008) Comedy, starring Owen Wilson. **3.05** Film: Space Camp. (1986) Children's sci-fi adventure, starring Kate Capshaw. **5.05** Film: Labyrinth. (1986) Fantasy adventure, starring Jennifer Connelly and David Bowie. **7.05** Film: The Wedding Planner. (2001) A single woman who organises weddings for a living is swept off her feet by a dashing doctor, but her dreams of him being the one are shattered after a setback when she discovers she has already been hired to organise his marriage to another woman. Romantic comedy, starring Jennifer Lopez, Matthew McConaughey, Bridgette Wilson-Sampas, Justin Chambers and Joanna Gleason. Edited for language. **8.55** 5 News Weekend. **9.00** Celebrity Big Brother. A chance to catch up with the latest events inside the house as the celebrities cope with living under constant surveillance, with all the arguments and alliances, as well as the revelations in the diary room. **10.00** Celebrity Bottched Up Bodies. Leading surgeons repair household names damaged by cosmetic surgery. **10.55** Film: Mr & Mrs Smith. (2005) Married assassins are hired to kill each other - a situation that restores some much-needed excitement to their relationship. Comedy adventure, with Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. **1.10** SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **3.10** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. (R) **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **5.45** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three **7.00** Great TV Mistakes **7.10** Pop's Greatest Dance Crazes **7.40** The Voice UK **9.00** Film: Die Hard with a Vengeance (1995) **11.00** Family Guy **11.45** American Dad! **12.30** Siblings **1.00** Adam Pearson: Freak Show **2.00** True North: Keeping 'Er Son **2.40** London Fashion Week: Grace Coddington's Top Picks **3.05** London Fashion Week: Abby Clancy's Top Picks **3.30** Emergency Rescue Down Under **4.00** Close **BBC Four** **11.55** India's Frontier Railways **8.00** Empire of the Tsars: Alexander Russia with Simon Schama **9.00** The Queen's Dancing Feet: The British Ballroom Story **10.00** Storyville: The Great Gangster Film **11.25** The Mystery of Murder: A Horizon Guide **12.25** The Brain with David Eagleman **1.25** Blank: A Horizon Guide to the Senses **2.25** Sounds of the Eighties **2.55** Danny Baker's Great Album Showdown **3.55** Close **ITV2** **11.55** Take Me Out **1.10** Take Me Out - The Gossip **2.15** Film: The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas (2000) **4.00** Film: The Mummy (1999) **6.20** Film: Cats & Dogs: The Revenge of Kitty Galore (2010) **8.00** Film: Skyfall (2012) **10.55** Film: The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006) **1.00** Reality Bites **1.45** Planet's Funniest Animals **2.30** Teleshopping **E4** **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** Tattoo Fixers **11.00** Rude Tube **12.10** The Inbetweeners **1.15** The IT Crowd **2.15** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **3.00** How I Met Your Mother **3.40** Hollyoaks **5.00** Film: Smokey and the Bandit (1977) **4.15** Film: The Sting (1973) **7.00** The Classic Car Show **8.00** River Monsters **9.00** Film: Exit Wounds (2001) **11.10** Film: Sleepers (1996) **2.05** As Men Go **2.50** TV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping **ITV4** **12.55** The Return of Sherlock Holmes **2.00** Midsomer Murders **8.00** Me and My Guide Dog **9.00** Caroline Quentin's National Parks **10.00** The Kindness of Strangers **11.35** Film: The Hours (2002) **1.45** Secret Smile **3.00** On the Buses **3.30** Heartbeat **5.10** Rising Damp **ITV** **12.20** Film: The 'Burbs (1989) **2.25** Film: Smokey and the Bandit (1977) **4.15** Film: The Sting (1973) **7.00** The Classic Car Show **8.00** River Monsters **9.00** Film: Exit Wounds (2001) **11.10** Film: Sleepers (1996) **2.05** As Men Go **2.50** TV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping **E** **5.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **10.00** Tattoo Fixers **11.00** Rude Tube **12.10** The Inbetweeners **1.15** The IT Crowd **2.15** Marvel's Agents of SHIELD **3.00** How I Met Your Mother **3.40** Hollyoaks **5.00** Film: Titanic (1997) **1.00** Brute Wars (2009) **2.50** The Last Mimzy (2007) **4.40** Carry On Behind (1975) **6.30** Anna Karenina (2012) **9.00** Bringing Down the House (2003) **11.05** Splice (2009)

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Willed to Kill, Channel 5, 3.15pm

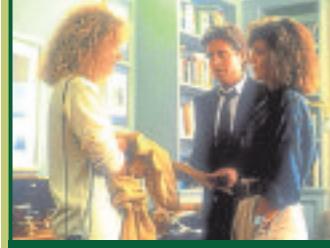
A homicide detective must face up to her own troubled childhood when a serial killer develops a twisted obsession with her. Thriller, with Sarah Jane Morris and Michael Riley. (2012)

Escape from Polygamy, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A widowed mother joins a religious cult and goes to live in their remote compound, where her teenage daughter falls in love with the son of the group's leader. When the preacher demands that the girl marry him, the two youngsters plan to escape together. Drama, starring Haley Lu Richardson, Jack Palahee and Mary McCormack. (2013)

The Gourmet Detective: A Healthy Place to Die, Channel 5, 3.15pm

Charming culinary expert Henry Ross is invited to give a speech at a food conference at a luxury resort, but when a journalist guest goes missing, and later turns up dead, Henry once again finds himself joining forces with no-nonsense police detective Maggie Price to solve the crime. Detective comedy sequel, starring Dylan Neal and Brooke Burns. (2015)

**Fatal Attraction, Friday, Channel 4, 12.55am****My Daughter Must Live, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

A woman discovers that her daughter needs a liver transplant, but medical tests reveal that her husband is not the girl's father. She is forced to track down her former lover, who was last seen fleeing for his life having crossed a corrupt businessman, but the quest jeopardises both her marriage and her life. Thriller, starring Joelle Carter and Madeleine Martin. (2014)

Fatal Attraction, Channel 4, 12.55am

A married lawyer has a one-night stand with a business associate while his wife and children are out of town. He hopes to keep his infidelity a secret, but she is determined to continue the relationship, and begins obsessively stalking him and his unsuspecting family. Thriller, starring Michael Douglas, Glenn Close and Anne Archer. (1987)

New series serves up a simple yet tasty treat

You just can't keep a good woman down, which perhaps explains why Mary Berry is back on the box this week – not just once, but twice.

She will be judging, alongside regular cohort Paul Hollywood, the efforts of a variety of famous faces who have agreed to take part in the new run of *The Great Sport Relief Bake Off*, which begins on Wednesday.

But before then, we can catch her in action in this offering, one that takes us back to basics.

Many TV cooks have, over the years, attempted to teach the nation to do more than just open a tin of beans, and they've done it with varying degrees of success. We reckon Mary will turn out to be the best of the lot.

Rather than going through such mundane tasks as boiling an egg or cooking pasta the right way, she offers handy practical tips on how to prepare simple but tasty and quick recipes that will keep everyone at home happy – and even serve you well if you're

organising a dinner party for family or friends.

Commissioning editor Tom Edwards says: "Mary is one of the ultimate icons of cookingery programming. It's a delight to serve her latest offering to a BBC Two audience."

"This series connects with something that is essential to Mary – delicious food, made foolproof."

Sadly, Mary's TV career hasn't been foolproof of late. Hollywood attempted to take the *Bake Off* to, er, Hollywood, when he made *The American Baking Competition* in 2013, but it bombed, never to rise again.

Mary followed in his footsteps late in 2015 with *The Great Holiday Baking Show*, which aped our own offering as closely as it could. It should have had 'success' written all over it, but instead it received the same kind of reception as Hollywood would give a tart with a soggy bottom – it lost almost a million viewers in a week.

Despite this setback, Mary is still keen on bringing her homespun wisdom to as many people as possible – and it seems that, if

she is attracted to a project, she will grab it with both hands. It's an approach she credits to a three-month spell she had in hospital after contracting polio as a child; she claims that being away from her family toughened her up and inspired her to make the most of every opportunity.

Mary will turn 81 in March, an age when many people are slowing down and enjoying their retirement. Instead, she heads back into the kitchen – something that delights her army of fans.

In the first edition of this series, she regales viewers with memories of her life, family and friends while demonstrating how to prepare five dishes suitable for special days and celebrations, including salmon fillets with herbs and red pepper and a side dish of spiralised vegetables as well as an indulgent treat of lobster tails with aioli and asparagus.

And if you've forgotten the instructions, as you might have already guessed, Mary has written a book to accompany the series, which is published on Thursday.

**Mary Berry's Foolproof Cooking, Monday, BBC2, 8.30pm**

BEST OF THE REST

Crashing**Channel 4, 10pm**

Life in the dilapidated hospital rumbles on, and we're enjoying every minute of watching it pan out. Phoebe Waller-Bridge's sitcom is an absolute delight, focusing on a group of people who have set up home in a disused building, paying minimal rent while attempting to prevent it becoming derelict. It's a great premise, and one that allows a real mixed bag of characters to take up residence. Among them is resident Irish curry chef Anthony, who this week organises an evening of spicy delights. Unfortunately, his efforts look set to be ignored as the event descends into chaos that leaves not just the fruits of his labour on the floor. Meanwhile, relationships come to the fore as Fred introduces his housemates to his new boyfriend.

The Mad World of Donald Trump**Channel 4, 9pm**

He's already a multi-billionaire tycoon, but now Donald Trump is out to become the President of the USA - and by extension, the most powerful person on the planet. His campaign is already one of the most controversial the US has ever seen, complete with plans to ban Muslims from entering the States

and to construct a wall to keep out Mexican immigrants. However, his promise to 'make America great again' has clearly resonated with many voters, and he's currently leading the polls for the Republican presidential nomination. Here, Matt Frei tries to uncover the man behind the brand, exploring Trump's colourful past and asking if he really could make it all the way to the White House.

Holocaust Memorial Day**BBC2, 7pm**

With more than 200 survivors in attendance, a unique commemoration at Guildhall, London marks Holocaust Memorial Day and remembers those persecuted and murdered by the Nazis, and those who died in later genocides. The ceremony includes personal testimony, music and poetry, with actors Sheila Hancock, Robert Lindsay, Kevin Whately and Freddie Fox taking part. Plus, the internationally renowned choir of Clare College Cambridge performs, and acclaimed violinist Jennifer Pike plays the theme from Schindler's List.

The Great Sport Relief Bake Off**BBC1, 8.30pm**

The celebrity edition of *The Great British Bake Off* returns, with each episode featuring four celebrities as they tackle three challenges set by judges Paul Hollywood and Mary Berry. Mel Giedroyc hosts the first edition, as comedian Jason Manford, Eastenders actress Maddy Hill, ex-England goalkeeper David James, and business woman and wife of the Prime Minister Samantha Cameron bake for Sport Relief in the *Bake Off* tent. For the signature challenge, they must make 24 canapes using rough puff pastry made from scratch, before creating Paris Brest, a French pastry confection, in the technical.

**The Great Sport Relief Bake Off, Wednesday, BBC1, 8.30pm****Britain's Bloody Crown****Channel 5, 8pm**

Historian Dan Jones's part-

dramatised journey through the War of the Roses reaches its thrilling conclusion tonight. At the centre of the story is Margaret Beaufort, a woman who could be described as being the power behind the throne. She was the mother of Henry Tudor, the man who defeated Richard III at the battle of Bosworth in 1485, and who was eventually crowned as Henry VII. Jones begins Mary's story in January 1457 when, at 13, two months after her husband's death, she gave birth to Henry, and set about doing whatever was necessary to protect her son and keep in her the monarch's good books. But it was her manipulation of certain events, enabling Henry to take control of the country, that remains Mary's biggest achievement.

FRIDAY**MOTD Live: The FA Cup****BBC1, 7.30pm**

Derby County v Manchester United (Kick-off 7.55pm). Gary Lineker presents coverage of the match from the fourth round of the famous competition, which takes place at the iPro Stadium. The Rams – chasing promotion back to the Premier League for the first time since the 2007/08 season – will fancy their chances against the Red Devils, who have come under fire this season for playing negative football and suffering some shock defeats.

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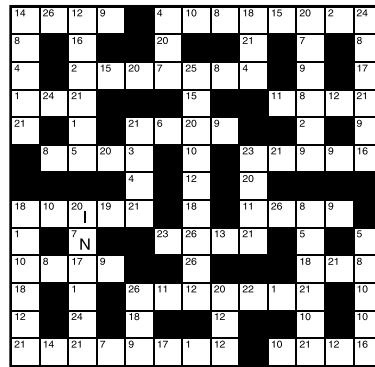
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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
U	E	G	R	W	Z	H	F	C	J	Q	O	A	B	S	N	I	V	X	M	K	Y	T	P	L	

Quiz

- What, in film-making, is a blimp?
- Between which two countries is the Brenner Pass?
- In which century did printer William Caxton live?
- Who was the Muse of history in Greek mythology?
- What is the international car registration for Denmark?
- In which year was the Eiffel Tower erected?
- What is the term for a person who makes arrows?
- In which country are one hundred grosz worth one zloty?
- What was the real name of Al Jolson?
- What sort of animal is a kob?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Pax; 2 Pickwick Papers; 3 12th August; 4 Offenbach; 5 Subscriber Trunk Dialling; 6 Jean Cocteau; 7 A breed of domestic fowl; 8 Sibelius; 9 Japan; 10 Pacific.
Niner: OBSTINACY

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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

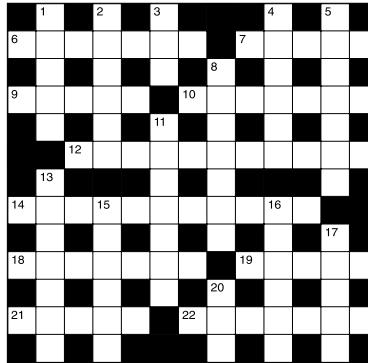
Cryptic Clues:

Across

6 & 7 Ac. Distress call from deprived fishermen, we hear!
7. See 6 Across
9. A kind of driver for the propeller (5)
10 & 13 Dn. Mail intended for London? (7,7)
12. Transport for one who wishes to retire (8-3)
14. Disease won't upset this resort (7,4)
18. It's at no different boarding place (7)
19, 10n. & 20n. Their job isn't to prevent daylight robbery! (5-8)
21. Manage to get through the exercise (5)
22. See 11 Down

Down

1. See 19 Across
2. Expose the facts about meat (6)
3. Potter needs it - that's a hint (3)
4. Successfully handling a kind of saw (6)
5. It annually contains an astronomical amount of information (7)
8. A trial's disrupted by cowboys' equipment (7)
11 & 22 Ac. Set out for the mountains, if you have one! (4,3,7)
13. See 10 Across
15. Pay for the bench (6)
16. Removes moisture from the arenas, we hear (6)
17. Talks in church at services (5)
20. See 19 Across
22. Sorrow (7)



Quick Clues:

Across

6. Generous (7)
7. Hoist (5)
9. Fashion (5)
10. Arrange (7)
12. Dishonour (11)
14. In brackets (11)
18. Twist (7)
19. Horse (5)
21. Portion (5)
22. Sorrow (7)

Down

1. Smaller (5)
2. Deny (6)
3. Whin (3)
4. Dictator (6)
5. Quibble (7)
8. Violinist (7)
11. Authors (7)
13. Pithy (7)
15. Allure (6)
16. Set (6)
17. Poetry (5)
20. Beam (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

9	5	3	4	7	1	8	6	2
8	6	7	9	3	2	5	4	1
4	2	1	6	8	9	7	3	5
2	1	5	8	6	4	3	9	7
7	3	6	2	4	5	1	8	9
6	3	8	5	9	7	1	4	6
3	9	4	1	2	6	1	8	5
5	7	2	1	8	9	4	3	6
1	8	6	3	4	5	7	2	9

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 6 Grained; 7 Auric; 9 Ace; 10 Revolting; 12 Misanthrope; 15 Sit-down meal; 17 Take place; 19 Dot; 21 Lease; 22 Haster. Down: 1 Brace; 2 Tip; 3 Mete; 4 Cut-throat; 5 Kidnaps; 8 Bottom; 11 Head band; 13 As; 14 Minaret; 16 Mouth; 18 Circle; 20 Stick; 21 JACK - A-Jack; 6 Conceal; 7 Tease; 9 Fee; 10 Dejection; 12 Up-and-downs; 15 Yellow fever; 17 Occupying; 19 Elk; 21 Under; 22 Awkward. Down: 1 Cover; 2 Act; 3 Base; 4 Destroyer; 5 Astound; 8 Meddle; 11 Applauded; 13 Always; 14 Descend; 16 Alert; 18 News; 20 Own.

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

7517 gives a song,
67894 gives a dance,
342219 gives a game.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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Comfortable and spacious interior with choice of seating options



Round off the meal with a delicious sweet



The Manor House of Whittington, formerly the Whittington Pub, on the A449



Camembert with rosemary and garlic

To the Manor House born and fed with service fit for royalty

STANDING outside The Manor House at Whittington I really felt I should be wearing twinset and pearls, not jeans and a jumper.

It looks rather grand and posh from the outside as well as cosy and inviting. The exterior gives little hint as to what is inside.

I was expecting a quaint, simple sleek interior. But what is actually waiting is a modern, contemporary, clean finish mixing a touch of traditional style with a more quirky and eclectic look.

The Grade-I listed building dates back to 1310 when it was built by Sir William de Whittington and apparently welcomed royalty during its historic past. It reopened last November after a major refurbishment of what was once The Whittington Inn.

Thankfully the bright yellow exterior has

Lisa Williams reports

long gone as is the tired and dated interior. It's been lovingly restored, with a £1.5 million price tag.

My boyfriend and I, along with both sets of parents, ventured in. The bright, glowing flames from an open fire were the first thing we saw. The bar area is airy and light.

Our table was comfy and intimate but a little bit too near the kitchen as we kept hearing the chef shout 'service', but it turns out this was also a good thing as we could see the food coming out and the pizzas being made. All of which looked scrumptious.

It had only been open a week so we were prepared for teething problems. There were a few, I'll get to them later.

We sat taking in the menu. The online version was not the same. My parents were ready for a turkey dinner and a risotto dish

neither of which featured. We quizzed our waitress, Stacey, who went to find out what was going on. Apparently it's the wrong menu online. Oops! Hopefully this is now resolved. Most was the same though so it was no great drama.

Charm

Service was slow at times but the staff, who were friendly and lovely, were probably finding their feet.

Drinks arrived, orders were taken and we sat back to take in the new decor. Rich burgundy and teal added a bright touch to the classic old world charm.

For starters we'd gone for a couple of Camembert sharers with great hunks of toasted sourdough bread and a sticky onion jam on the side. It was gorgeously gooey.

For the mains I'd gone for a pretty basic pizza, less is more. Marinated buffalo mozzarella, mozzarella, sun-dried tomatoes and basil on the best base I've ever tasted.

Mum had gone for the butternut squash tart. She loved the flavours but the potato salad was a little dry with no dressing. Dad had the Josper roasted half chicken, in beer, thyme and malt butter and enjoyed it.

The fish and chips were also a success as the boyfriend's mum tucked in. For the boyfriend and his father burgers arrived, great stacks of chargrilled, perfectly pink in the middle. But . . . the burgers were cold. They were swiftly and politely replaced with plenty of apologies.

Some of us saved room for dessert. I was defeated but two portions of the dark chocolate and raspberry brownie were ordered.

Full, sated and happy, we all agreed we would return soon. While the food does need a teeny tiny bit of improving, the four stars go to the staff.

GET CUSTOMERS MOVING ADVERTISE

Advertisements in local newspapers and websites are the most popular way of keeping an eye on the property market

SOURCE: The Newspaper Society - Consumer Catalyst 2014

Property

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING



Choosing the right agent for your home

SELECTING which estate agency to sell your home (your biggest asset) can be worrying for anyone. You can make your decision more straightforward by following a few simple rules:

The first thing to do when searching for a quality estate agent is to check that they belong to a professional body like the NAEA. This is because all our members have to complete an accredited qualification on estate agency and are bound by strict rules. Selecting an agent who is one of our members will ensure your peace of mind as they offer a solid understanding of the market, and furthermore, we offer you a fair complaints procedure.

A great help when selecting an agent is reputation. If family, friends, neighbours or people you know have had a good experience with a particular agent, then this can be a great help in making your decision.

Look out for the number of 'for sale' signs and in particular 'sold' signs around your local area. This will tell you which agents are most popular, and therefore can generate more leads for you.

Advertisements for properties in the local newspapers will also tell you which agents stand out from the rest and also tell you which areas the agents cover. The local press will help to inform you how the local market is performing. This empowers you when talking to agents, buyers and interested parties.

Make sure you get on well with your chosen agent – this will be invaluable during the whole process.

Remember, choosing a member of the NAEA offers higher standards, protection and a complaints procedure for you. You can search for NAEA members at <http://www.naea.co.uk/find-agent/>

Making your home more attractive

THERE'S a range of things you can do to make your home more attractive when you decide to put it on the market, from reorganising the furniture to tidying the garden.

A welcoming kitchen is one of the biggest attractions for potential house buyers. Whether you have a comfortable family oriented meeting place or a stylish singletons galley, the kitchen is most often the heart of the home.

Regardless of your budget, there are a number of simple ways you can maximise its attraction to buyers and speed up the sale of your house: Replacing your entire kitchen to attract buyers is not always necessary. Often the cost of installing a new kitchen outweighs the value it will add to your asking price. Like all home decor, the kitchen will still be subject to personal taste, so if it does not appeal to your buyers they will refit it upon moving in anyway. If your kitchen is very dated, simple changes can make all the difference. Painting the cupboard doors, replacing handles or taps and re-grouting the tiles can all give a new lease of life.

Clean and de-clutter! Viewers may even look in your cupboards so ensure shelves are cleaned and all contents are organised. Any pet bowls should go outside as potential buyers may not be animal lovers so could be put off by the sight of half eaten pet food.

If necessary, box up items you don't use very often and put them in storage. If your cupboards and drawers are overflowing, buyers will assume there is little storage space, which can be off-putting. Keep work surfaces as clear as possible to enhance the



appearance of cleanliness.

Flowers or pot pourri on window sills create a welcoming atmosphere and add a fresh fragrance.

Using these simple but effective ideas will ensure your kitchen looks appealing and entices potential buyers into a prompt decision! No matter how big your home, it's important to maximise the rooms to create a sense of space, especially if you are trying to sell your property.

Here are some tips to make any home feel more spacious:

Mirrors are great for making your home feel

more spacious. In small areas large mirrors can be used to make the room look longer or wider. They are especially useful in hallways where they can be used to manipulate the perception of space by reflecting light and colour.

Having too big a dining table in your dining room can make the area shrink. To maximise space, put up roman blinds rather than curtains, and plan your storage carefully so that clutter is out of sight. This is especially important in the bedroom, because the less clutter you see, the more relaxing the room will be.

Match neutral colours on the walls with similar

flooring in downstairs spaces to give the impression of space flowing from one room to another. Bright shades of carpet or distracting patterns are to be avoided.

If you follow all of these ideas then you are sure to achieve the maximum use of space in your home, and in turn attain the highest possible price for it.

Gardens are too often forgotten in the race to make the most of a property, but their condition can sometimes be the deciding factor on value. It's a common-held belief that the decision on whether or not to buy a property is made within the first few moments of viewing it.

The state of the front garden is therefore a prime consideration for anyone choosing to sell their home. Drive-by desirability is all important as first impressions really do count. Make sure your front garden is neat, tidy and easily maintained. Hanging baskets and flower troughs establish the cared-for look without creating too much work. Any lawn areas should be neatly trimmed, and trees cut back and controlled. A well-presented front door, with pots alongside it, goes a long way towards generating a sense of welcome.

The back of the house is arguably even more important than the front, as this is where the most work is likely to lie. Today's busy lifestyle means the majority of people don't have much time to spend on gardening, so creating some low maintenance areas is invaluable. Decking, paving and woodchips can be used to differentiate areas of the garden and simplify them. Any trees and hedges should be kept under control and fences maintained.



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SEDGLEY, Northway

EXTENDED, Freehold, gas centrally heated, double glazed detached with flexible room arrangements comprising; porch, hallway, L shape through living room, dining room, rear hallway, cloakroom, secondary lounge, well equipped kitchen. Two staircases to first floor with FOUR BEDROOMS (one with bathroom en suite) and further shower room, Garage, parking, garden, EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £269,000



NETHERTON, Hockley Lane

Within an EXCLUSIVE COLLECTION of SEVEN LUXURY NEW BUILD HOMES known as YEW TREE - PLOT THREE is a thoughtfully designed FOUR BEDROOM DETACHED WITH SPACIOUS LIVING ACCOMMODATION and high specification. Anticipated completion Feb 2016. EPC: T

£245,000



COSELEY, Southall Crescent

CONSTRUCTED in 2008 a SPACIOUS, double glazed, gas centrally heated detached set at head of private driveway & comprising; porch, hall, cloakroom, lounge, CONSERVATORY, kitchen, utility room, THREE BEDROOMS (two with built in wardrobes & principal bedroom with shower room en suite), bathroom, garage, extensive parking, gardens. EPC: C SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £230,000



SEDGLEY, Wolverhampton Road

EDWARDIAN ELEGANCE! SPACIOUS, gas centrally heated, double glazed semi detached of character retaining many fine period features comprising; hall, lounge, dining room, family room, kitchen, utility, cloakroom. Three double bedrooms (principal bedroom with shower room en suite), bathroom. VAST ROOF SPACE. Gardens, Vehicular access to EXTENSIVE PARKING. EPC: E SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £200,000



LOWER GORNAL, Sandstone Close

SCANDINAVIAN STYLE. Gas centrally heated, double glazed detached family home constructed to first quality specification & in exemplary order. Designed to match adjacent property with minimal energy/running costs the accommodation includes; hall, cloakroom, lounge, 19ft 'hub' of the house' dining kitchen, garden room. Three bedrooms, bathroom, garden, GARAGE (rear), additional parking. EPC: C SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £189,950



UPPER GORNAL, Pale Street

SPACIOUS, NEW BUILD, gas centrally heated, double glazed dormer style detached with flexible room arrangements. Conveniently situated, the accommodation comprises; hall, stylish BATHROOM, double bedroom, magnificent 'hub' of the house' 19 ft living/dining/kitchen, garage, 207" principal bedroom with shower room en suite. Parking, gardens, distant views. EPC: SAP: B SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £189,950



NETHERTON, Saltwells Road

A FANTASTIC opportunity to purchase a MOST IMPRESSIVE, EXTENDED, DOUBLE FRONTED, DETACHED HOME comprising; Porch, Hall, TWO RECEPTION ROOMS, Kitchen, Utility, TWO DOUBLE FIRST FLOOR BEDROOMS, Bathroom, Driveway, Garage, LARGE GARDEN. EPC: D

£169,950



Dudley, East Street

This SUBSTANTIAL and EXTENDED, SEMI-DETACHED HOME is furnished with a LARGE WELL FITTED KITCHEN and FOUR GENEROUS BEDROOMS. Also comprising: TWO RECEPTION ROOMS, FAMILY BATHROOM, En Suite Shower Room, Driveway, GARAGE and a Pleasant Rear Garden. EPC: D

£169,500



NETHERTON, The Beck

This MODERN, THREE BEDROOM PROPERTY would make a lovely FAMILY HOME and comprises; Hall, Guests W.C, Spacious Lounge, Modern Breakfast Kitchen, Three Bedrooms (Master with En-Suite), White Suite Bathroom, Off Road Parking, Rear Garden. EPC: C

£139,950



PENSNETT, Corbys Hall Road

SITUATED within this ADMIRER ADDRESS, this THOUGHTFULLY EXTENDED, SEMI-DETACHED PROPERTY comprises; Hall, Through Lounge, Extended Kitchen Diner, THREE BEDROOMS, Family Bathroom, Block paved Driveway, Enlarged Garage, Pleasant Garden. EPC: C

£134,950



DUDLEY, Vanborough Walk

This family home is excellently presented and is situated in the popular London Heights, Dudley area. It benefits from upvc double glazing, gas central heating, THREE BEDROOMS, living room, kitchen-diner, conservatory, family bathroom, integral garage, enclosed rear garden and driveway to front. Viewing is highly recommended. EPC: C SEDGLEY

Offers in the Region of £132,950



LOWER GORNAL, The Straits

An attractive SIGNIFICANTLY EXTENDED gas centrally heated and UPVC double glazed semi detached 'miner cottage' with NO UPWARD CHAIN envirably situated in favoured/convenient district. The property offers further potential and presently comprises entrance hallway, lounge, extended 17ft 'hub' of the house' dining kitchen (with patio doors out to garden), lobby, separate toilet. Two bedrooms, bathroom, delightful particularly lengthy sheltered rear garden. EPC: C SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £130,000



NETHERTON, Halesowen Road

This TRADITIONAL, SEMI-DETACHED HOME comprises; Porch, Spacious Hall, TWO LOVELY RECEPTION ROOMS, WELL FITTED Kitchen, THREE GENEROUS BEDROOMS, Family Bathroom, Large Block Paved Driveway, Garage and Pleasant Front & Rear Gardens. EPC: C

£129,950



LOWER GORNAL, Boundary Hill

EXTENDED, gas centrally heated, majority double glazed semi detached with in walking distance of village & having block paved off road parking comprising; porch, hallway, cloakroom, 16 ft lounge and brick/upvc double glazed CONSERVATORY, extended/upgraded 17 ft kitchen; THREE DOUBLE BEDROOMS, bathroom. Wider than average garden, good distant views. EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £118,000



NETHERTON, Highbridge Road

Conveniently situated within this established address, this DECEPTIVELY LARGE AND MOST APPEALING, THREE BEDROOM, SEMI DETACHED HOME, briefly comprises; Hall, Sitting Room, Dining Room, Kitchen, Guests Cloakroom, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Driveway Garage and Garden. EPC: D

£115,000



GORNAL WOOD, Brook Street

Beautifully presented, traditional, upvc double glazed, gas centrally heated, TWO BEDROOM mid-terraced property set in the popular, Gornal Wood. This fabulous home benefits from double glazing, gas central heating, entrance hallway, fitted-kitchen, extended living room, family bathroom, THREE BEDROOMS, integrated garage, good-sized enclosed rear garden, NO UPWARD CHAIN. Viewing essential. EPC Rating: C SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £114,950



COSELEY, Hinchcliffe Avenue

A deceptively spacious, extended leasehold semi-detached property is set in a cul-de-sac location in the popular area of Coseley. This family home benefits from double glazing, gas central heating, entrance hallway, fitted-kitchen, extended living room, family bathroom, THREE BEDROOMS, integrated garage, good-sized enclosed rear garden, NO UPWARD CHAIN. Viewing essential. EPC Rating: C SEDGLEY

New price WAS £119,950, NOW £110,000



DUDLEY, Occupation Street

Well maintained end of terrace property which offers potential and is an ideal starter home. It is situated in the sought after area of Dudley and benefits from upvc double glazing, gas central heating, TWO DOUBLE BEDROOMS, through-lounge, kitchen, fitted shower room, enclosed rear garden, driveway to front and detached garage. NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC: D SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £107,950

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SEDGLEY, 'Algar Grange', Off Dudley Road

RARE OPPORTUNITY! - An exciting new development of 11 plots under construction by the Woodbourne Group of gas centrally heated & Upvc double glazed detached BUNGALOWS & dormer bungalows in short/quiet cul-de-sac within walking distance of Sedgley's Bull Ring & all associated amenities. Three designs available with prices from £218,500 up to £264,500, and First Phase scheduled for early April. SAP: T.B.A. Further details/plans/specification etc. with Agents Sedgley Office.

PRICES FROM £218,500



SEDGLEY, Warren Drive, Northway

A stylish tremendously enhanced freehold gas centrally heated UPVC double glazed link-detached with tremendous distant views in favoured district. Delightful accommodation includes entrance hallway, reappointed fitted cloak room and further store, 26ft through living/dining room (previously separate rooms) with double doors out to garden, upgraded kitchen with an extensive range of units and various integrated appliances FOUR BEDROOMS (principle bedroom with en suite) reappointed/re-tiled bathroom with contemporary white suite, carpet, large garage, secluded rear garden. EPC Rating TBC. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £210,000



PENSNETT, Fernhurst Drive

Pleasantly located within this very popular address, this SUBSTANTIAL, BEAUTIFULLY IMPROVED DETACHED FAMILY HOUSE offers a generous FOUR BEDROOM layout with EN-SUITE, plus a driveway, GARAGE and a good sized, well maintained garden. EPC TBA

£204,950



WOODSETTON, Park Close

Attractive. Freehold, gas centrally heated, mostly uPVC double glazed semi detached at head of short cul-de-sac briefly comprising: entrance porch, hall, lounge with bay, dining room, kitchen. Three bedrooms, tiled bathroom. Parking, secluded rear garden with substantial timber workroom. EPC: D. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £150,000

LOWER GORNAL, Grafton Gardens, Straits

NO UPWARD CHAIN. Enviable situated in cul-de-sac just off The Straits within walking distance of the village & backing on to country park at rear; a significantly improved, Freehold, gas centrally heated & double glazed internal "family home", briefly comprising: Hallway, spacious living/dining room, rear hallway with store, kitchen. Three generous bedrooms, refitted bathroom with white suite. Garage, sheltered garden abutting on to woodland. EPC: E. SEDGLEY

Fixed Price of £140,000



Brierley Hill, John Street

This BEAUTIFULLY PRESENTED, MODERN, DETACHED HOME occupies a FINE CORNER SETTING and is appointed with a LOVELY KITCHEN and THREE GENEROUS BEDROOMS. Also comprising: Attractive Lounge, Guests Cloakroom, Stylish Lounge, CONTEMPORARY BREAKFAST KITCHEN, THREE BEDROOMS (Master with En-Suite), Modern Bathroom, Pretty Garden, Off Road Parking. EPC: C

Now available

£139,995



NETHERTON, The Beck

Forming part of this MODERN DEVELOPMENT, This GORGEOUS HOME comprises: Hall, Guests Cloakroom, Stylish Lounge, CONTEMPORARY BREAKFAST KITCHEN, THREE BEDROOMS (Master with En-Suite), Modern Bathroom, Pretty Garden, Off Road Parking. EPC: C

£139,950



Brierley Hill, The Breeze
PERFECT for FIRST TIME BUYERS & YOUNG FAMILIES. This MODERN STYLE, THREE BEDROOM HOME comprises: Hall, Guests W.C, Stylish Lounge, Splendid Modern Kitchen, THREE BEDROOMS, White Suite Bathroom, Pretty Rear Gardens, Allocated Parking. EPC: C

£139,950



SEDGLEY, The Walk

LARGE EXTENSION AND TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL! A gas centrally heated (combi boiler) and part UPVC double glazed semi detached for improvement in popular/convenient district. With a number of character features the accommodation includes entrance hall, through lounge (with patio doors), kitchen, lobby, separate toilet, store, further living/occasional bedroom with large shower/wet room ensuite. Three bedrooms, bathroom, drive, secluded rear garden. EPC: C. SEDGLEY

Offers in the region of £125,000

UPPER GORNAL, Eve Lane

A fantastically presented traditional semi-detached property situated in the popular Upper Gornal area. It consists of entrance hall, well-appointed lounge, fitted kitchen-diner, THREE BEDROOMS, family bathroom, enclosed rear garden with CABIN, centrally heated & double glazed, off-road parking. EPC Rating D. SEDGLEY

Offers in the Region of £124,950



UPPER GORNAL, Nailors Grove

NO UPWARD CHAIN. Well presented good-sized family property situated in the popular area of Upper Gornal. The gas centrally heated accommodation includes entrance hall, living room, dining room, breakfast-kitchen, conservatory, guest W.C, utility, THREE BEDROOMS, bathroom. Enclosed rear garden, driveway to front. EPC Rating D. SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £122,500



HOLLY HALL, Woodside Road

This EXTENDED, THREE BEDROOM, SEMI-DETACHED HOME comprises: Hall, Lounge, Fitted Kitchen, Well Appointed Wet Room, Three Generous First Floor Bedrooms, Family Bathroom, LARGE GARDEN with ADDITIONAL LAND EXTENDING TO THE SIDE. EPC: C

£119,950



DUDLEY, Garrick Close, "Earls Keep"

GROUND FLOOR APARTMENT - Within walking distance of many amenities and representing a RARE OPPORTUNITY a gas centrally heated & double glazed ground floor apartment (with 'entry phone' style access to communal parts) comprising: central reception hall, two bedrooms (principle bedroom with shower room en suite), lounge, dining section, kitchen, bathroom. Extensive communal grounds/allocated parking. EPC: C

New price Was £125,000, NOW £119,750



DUDLEY, Elm Green, Old Park Farm Estate

A conscientiously maintained and well presented, semi-detached property with UPVC double glazing, part gas centrally heated and situated the popular area of 'The Greens'. This fine property benefits from THREE BEDROOMS, living room, kitchen-diner, guest W.C, refitted bathroom, block-paved driveway and enclosed rear garden. NO UPWARD CHAIN. EPC: D. SEDGLEY

Offers in the Region of £104,950

NETHERTON, Chester Road

Enjoying a BRILLIANT CORNER POSITION, This STYLISH, SEMI-DETACHED HOME comprises: Hall, Lovely Lounge, Kitchen Diner, TWO GENEROUS BEDROOMS, Well Appointed Bathroom, Large External Work Shop, Driveway, Beautiful Rear Garden. EPC: E

£104,950



BROCKMOOR, Campbell Street

THIS SPACIOUS, PERIOD STYLE, THREE BEDROOM, END TERRACE HOME is offered for sale with NO UPWARD CHAIN & comprises: TWO RECEPTION ROOMS, Cellar, GENEROUS FITTED KITCHEN, Bathroom, Three First Floor Bedrooms & Rear Garden. EPC: E

£89,950



NETHERTON, Farm Road

THIS TRADITIONAL TWO BEDROOM, SEMI DETACHED HOME offers EXCELLENT POTENTIAL and would make the ideal FIRST HOME. Briefly comprises: Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Two Generous BedRooms, Bathroom, Front and Rear Gardens. NO UPWARD CHAIN! EPC: F

Now available

£79,950



COSELEY, Hollywell Street, Hurst Hill

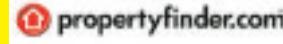
Delightful recently gas centrally heated (combi boiler) and UPVC double glazed FIRST FLOOR flat conveniently situated within walking distance of so many day to day amenities. Individual front door to entrance hallway with staircase up to hall, lounge, kitchen, double bedroom, bathroom, two generous stores, communal grounds. EPC: C. SEDGLEY.

Offers in the region of £64,950



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The Market Is Moving ARE YOU...??

Extended semi-detached home has four bedrooms



A SUBSTANTIAL and extended four-bedroomed semi-detached home in East Street, Dudley, comes with a large kitchen and four generous bedrooms.

With a pleasant rear garden, it is for sale through Taylors at £169,500.

With double glazing and gas central heating it has a reception hall with stairs off, an attractive sitting room with a bay window, a pleasant dining room with ample space for a table and chairs.

An extended fitted modern kitchen with light oak style units and contrasting marble-effect working surfaces and splash-back tiling, an integrated oven with a microwave above and an integral dishwasher and a built-in five-ring hob with a cooker hood over.

There is a driveway and a garage. The substantial rear garden includes a patio area, lawn and borders.

Contact Taylors on (01384) 265265 or visit 01384 265265 or visit www.taylors-estateagents.co.uk



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Kia Optima's evolution

By James Parker

The fourth-generation Optima has a modern, new exterior, a bold interior design with more space for occupants, new technologies and a wide choice of efficient powertrains.

The new model offers greater refinement and improved ride and handling over the outgoing model, while retaining the sporty image that has helped Optima become one of Kia's best-selling models worldwide.

The Kia Optima plays an important role in the Kia Motors Europe product line-up, introducing the brand to an increasing number of new customers. Since the third-generation model launched in 2011, with its distinctive look, high-quality interior and high-tech image, the Optima has offered buyers something fresh and different in the D-segment.

The all-new Optima's evolutionary new look was designed to be functional and sporty, with exterior dimensions that are marginally longer, taller and wider. These changes enable a roomier and more comfortable cabin, with more head-, shoulder- and rear-seat leg-room and greater cargo capacity.

This model is the most aerodynamic Optima to date, with drag reduced from 0.3 to 0.29 Cd.

The all-new Kia Optima will be available in Europe in a choice of nine colours, with

alloy wheels ranging from 16-in to 18in diameter.

The material quality of the all-new Optima's cabin is significantly improved over the outgoing model, with a far higher proportion of soft-touch materials, as well as cloth and leather trim in natural tones.

Tasteful metallic accents throughout the cabin add a higher quality ambience to the interior.

The larger interior and exterior dimensions ensure that the all-new model is the most practical, spacious and comfortable. Cargo space has grown from 505 to 510 litres (VDA), with the under-floor storage area and a wider boot opening adding greater practicality.

High-strength

It features a uniquely engineered body which combines more high-strength materials than ever before, resulting in even higher standards of crash safety. While passive safety is improved, the new model is also equipped with a series of high-tech active and autonomous safety features, and Kia's engineers have targeted a five-star Euro NCAP safety rating throughout the Optima's development programme.

Kia's vehicle stability management is fitted as standard, ensuring stability under braking and cornering by controlling the car's electronic stability control and electric motor-driven power steering if it detects a loss of traction.

The Optima is available with a wide range of optional active hazard-avoidance technologies, depending on market.



The new model offers greater refinement and improved ride and handling

Improving ride and handling was a top priority for Kia's dynamic development teams, with a focus on delivering the ride comfort and stability customers expect from a D-segment sedan, while achieving the level of agility promised by the car's sportier appearance.

The all-new Optima debuts a number of new, advanced on-board technologies to improve usability, comfort and convenience.

The touchscreen infotainment system is paired with a six-speaker audio system as standard.

A powerful Harman Kardon premium sound system, featuring 10 speakers, an external amplifier and Clari-Fi MP3 restoration technology, is also available as an option.

The all-new Kia Optima will offer the company's unique seven-year, 150,000-mile warranty as standard.

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More than a Mondeo but still practical

By Matt Joy

Ford has released the first car to wear its up-market Vignale badge, but is it just a more expensive Mondeo or something more substantial?

This is brand new territory for Ford, as it seeks to muscle in on the compact premium sector with the Mondeo Vignale. More than just a trim designation, Vignale models sit at the top of the Mondeo range and have unique exterior and interior elements and are designed to offer superior comfort.

What's more, they are finished in a special area of Ford's Valencia factory, with additional layers of paint and higher quality standards, and if you buy one you can only do so from specially-chosen Ford dealers. You'll get a higher standard of service too, with free collection and pick-up from your dedicated Vignale dealerperson.

On the outside, there's unique alloy wheels, a gloss finish to the grille and pillars, and some extra chrome detailing, plus those unmissable badges. The Mondeo Vignale is also available in just four colours: black, silver, white and 'Nocciola' – brown to you and me.

It's a handsome machine, arguably more so in estate form, and while the Vignale extras do make it a little more posh, there's no denying it's still clearly a Mondeo. It's very early days for this sub-brand, and only time will tell if buyers respond to its perceived elevation over the standard car.

It gets better on the inside, however. As the Vignale sits above the Titanium X in the Mondeo range, it is positively groaning with kit. There's a big Sony audio system with satnav and Ford's SYNC2 system, active noise cancelling (more of which later), ambient lighting and you can even have ventilated massage seats.

Practical

There's also leather – tons of the stuff. The seats have their own pattern (designed to echo that of the front grille) plus it's on the dashboard, the doors and even on the centre armrest. It's here you begin to feel that you're getting something for the additional outlay, although obviously it is just as practical as a regular Mondeo.

As you'd expect, the Vignale is standard Mondeo underneath, but that's no bad thing. What has changed is that the suspension has been tweaked to deliver a smoother ride, while there's acoustic side glass as standard and the noise cancelling system to keep the cabin hushed.

With the most-popular 2.0 TDCI unit and the Powershift transmission taking care of gearshifts, piloting the Mondeo Vignale is a genuinely relaxing experience. The ride may be smoother but it still has the Ford sharpness of response you'd expect, while the reduction in noise levels is a welcome improvement.

Most of the German competition go for a sporty feel, whereas the Mondeo Vignale is comfort oriented, which potentially gives it an advantage on the UK's poor roads.

Take a look at the spec sheet and the final price makes sense. The options list is very small indeed, while the standard spec runs to that sophisticated Sony system including satnav, a rear view camera, ambient lighting and a fully-electric driver's seat. A complete leather interior and the special alloy wheels come with it too. It's worth noting, however, that the key German rivals are very close on price, although, if you equalise the specification, a big price gap opens up.

So will the Mondeo Vignale find favour with customers, or sit forlornly in its special corner of the showroom? Well, the fact is that buyers do like high-spec Mondeos; the stats show that the Titanium X simply isn't enough for some. It's also a useful higher step for people climbing the company car ladder, and Ford is clear about most of its sales coming in this way. There's also a hybrid version if you want the petrol electric combination.

This car summed up in a single word: Soothing.

If this car was a jacket, it would be sumptuous and welcoming woollen overcoat.

TESTED

Ford Mondeo Vignale 2.0 TDCI 180PS, £29,345

Engine: 2.0-litre diesel unit producing 178bhp and 295lb.ft of torque

Transmission: Six-speed manual gearbox driving the front wheels

Performance: Top speed 140mph, 0-62mph in 8.3 seconds

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Emissions: 117g/km of CO₂



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Salute to the McLaren F1

According to its creator, Gordon Murray, the McLaren F1 was "an attempt to build the best engineered driver's car ever made."

It was an attempt that clearly succeeded... according to F1 owner and serial car collector Jay Leno, it is simply "the Greatest Car of the 20th Century."

Produced between 1992 and 1998, just 106 examples were built. Of that figure a mere 64 were standard road cars, so there's only a remote chance of seeing one in the flesh.

Unless you head to the London Classic Car Show at London's ExCeL centre next month, that is. For a special display devoted to the F1 and curated by designer Gordon Murray will form one of the major attractions at the show.

No fewer than five F1s will be shown – two standard road cars, two GTR racers and a

'long tail' F1 GT road car. Last year we paid tribute to Adrian Newey with an amazing display of his world beaters; this year we are putting the spotlight on Gordon Murray and, in particular, the amazing McLaren F1 he fathered," explained Event Director, Bas Bungish. "All those involved in what's clearly going to be a very special homage to the F1 believe it will be by far the best, and most complete, insight ever put together for the public thus something no car enthusiast will want to miss. As well as Gordon himself, we are working very closely with those at McLaren's own MSO Heritage and acknowledged F1 specialists Lanzante to ensure this fabulous display is as comprehensive and detailed as possible."

To give visitors a unique insight into the world's first 'million dollar motor' – the McLaren cost £634,500 when new – one of the road cars will be displayed with its doors, bonnet and engine cover open, while one of the racers will have its exterior panels removed to show what goes on under the skin.

The showcase will be completed with a number of F1-related artefacts including the race suit worn by JJ Lehto when he won the 1995 Le Mans 24 Hours in an F1. Also on display will be the road car's bespoke luggage, a BMW engine block, one of the TAG Heuer watches given to each owner and engraved with their car's build number and an example of the car's bespoke tool kit, made from gold-plated titanium no less.

Technical drawings, photos and special films produced by McLaren to celebrate the car's 20th anniversary its famous Le Mans 24 Hours victory in 2015 will also be shown.

"When we started work on the F1 we benchmarked all the existing supercars from Ferrari, Lamborghini, Porsche and so on, as well as aspects of cars as varied as the contemporary Honda NSX and the 1960s



No fewer than five F1s will be shown – two standard road cars, two GTR racers and a 'long tail' F1 GT road car

Lotus Elan. The idea was to better the performance, vehicle dynamics, handling and ride comfort of all of them at the same as producing a car that could, genuinely, be used every day.

"We achieved it all... except perhaps the steering. The F1 gets very close but doesn't quite better the purity of the Lotus Elan's steering," said Murray.

Partly because each car took three and a half months to build and partly because it is crammed full of exotic materials including gold leaf, titanium, magnesium and Kevlar, McLaren lost money on each car made despite that heady price tag.

Those with the foresight and wherewithal to buy the car when it was new, however,

couldn't have made a better investment. Last August a 1998 McLaren F1 LM sold at auction in America by Sotheby's for close to £9 million.

One of the unique features of the London Classic Car Show is The Grand Avenue, a roadway running through the centre of the exhibition hall along which classics of all different shapes and sizes are put through their paces.

It is anticipated that one of the McLarens will take to The Grand Avenue during the show so visitors will not just be able to gaze at this remarkable British car at rest, but see and hear it in action, too.

Tickets for the London Classic Car Show are on sale now.



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Skoda's great car range

Citigo

The Citigo is Skoda's take on the most modern citycar design in the market. With the Czech brand on the bonnet, it makes value sense too.

It's an impressive compact city car which borrows the technological expertise offered by Skoda's parent company, Volkswagen. It then adds it with the value we expect from this rapidly growing Czech brand.

Those in search of a beautifully conceived, affordable and impressively space and fuel-efficient urban runabout should seriously consider it.

Go for the slightly pokier 75PS variant and Skoda includes its efficiency package (with start/stop and everything else) as standard with this engine, so the returns achieved – 67.3mpg on the combined cycle and 98g/km – are substantially better than most rivals.

Whether you opt for your Citigo with 60 or 75PS, the benefits of the efficiency package are important given that they take this car below the 100g/km barrier, making it completely free from congestion charges and delivering all kinds of tax benefits.

Fabia Compact Hatchback and Estate

Skoda ups the ante with its third-generation Fabia, introducing sharper, more assertive styling and clever technology. With more space inside, increased scope for personalisation and better efficiency from its engines, the Fabia has the basics spot on.

The Fabia has done very well for Skoda. Around 3.5 million cars have sold to date, split between 1.8 million first-generation Fabias and

around 1.7 million second-generation cars. That's quite some success story. The Fabia blends a mix of abilities and can probably be described as the car that offers the most quality for your pound in its sector.

Skoda Octavia

The talented new Skoda Octavia is bigger and better value than most of its rivals, a medium-sized hatch for the price of a compact-sized one.

If you're after more performance, then you'll appreciate one of the sporty vRS models. Horses for courses you see.

And if those courses are likely to be on the rough and muddy side, then you'll be interested in the four-wheel drive system also developed for this car, primarily for a Scout estate model with additional body cladding and a raised ride height.

Skoda Superb

The aptly-named, prestigious new Skoda Superb looks better than ever, is even more polished inside and backs that up with ever better efficiency measures.

Increasingly, the big hatchback or estate car is filling a bit of a niche. There's little doubt that at this price point it's hard to buy better than the Skoda Superb if you're really not after a 4x4 or a people carrier.

It rides and handles better than any comparatively-priced SUV or MPV we can think of, it's elegantly understated and it makes sense on the balance sheet, too.

Rapid

Skoda understands its customers. Ease of ownership, value pricing and solid build are all



priorities. All are satisfied by the Golf competing Rapid.

That the brand can deliver more sophistication than this is not in doubt – the larger Octavia demonstrates that. But the point here is that a significant number of customers just don't need it and the new Rapid is tailor made for them.

In addition Skoda offers the Rapid Spaceback which features a longer wheelbase and sportier look.

Yeti

Then there's the incredible, multi-award winning Yeti, a very spacious but externally compact Yeti, which strikes the perfect balance between on road performance, family orientated practicality and rugged 4x4 styling. It's available with a choice of two or four-wheel drive and diesel and petrol engines.

What makes Skoda's Yeti so appealing? It's spacious, safe, drives well, has a cool but

understated image and extremely low running costs. The latest car adds a little equipment, tidies the interior and tweaks the styling but otherwise sticks to a tried and tested recipe. In truth, not a lot needed changing. The Yeti remains a class act.

All new Skodas are covered by a comprehensive, three-year (60,000 mile) parts and labour warranty, a 12-year anti-perforation warranty, plus you'll gain three-year's RAC membership cover.

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Suzuki's Celerio an honest car

By John Griffiths

You may have noticed that new car prices are on a rapid upward spiral, so that even some of the 'value' brands now cost the sort of money which would have bought you a premium saloon a few years ago.

But to be fair, even the most cynical among us can't put automotive inflation down to simple profiteering. There is, for example, mounting pressure on car makers to make massive investments in research and development in the fields of safety, fuel economy and reducing exhaust emissions.

Jaguar Land Rover's £1 billion investment in a new plant to produce the super efficient Ingenium diesel engine on the outskirts of Wolverhampton is one example. Then, of course, there are the new hybrid and fuel cell technologies.

Buyers are also demanding more: some cars now have so many electronic gadgets we older folk need a further education course to use them properly. But where does that leave those of us who can't afford a new car, with the benefits of a fuel efficient engine and a peace of mind warranty?

Well, there's the Suzuki Celerio, with one of the largest cabins in the 'city car' class, over 60mpg, zero road tax and one of the cheapest new cars you can buy with prices from £7,414. That's the price for the entry level 'SZ2' test car: a practical hatchback with few frills but all the essentials. There are better equipped Celerios further up the range, and even a more economical engine, but this base model is hard to beat if you want true value for money motoring.

It still comes, for example, with a full safety package including anti-lock brakes with electronic brake force distribution, emergency brake assist, electronic stability control and six airbags.

There's also a decent DAB radio and CD player, tinted glass electric front windows and an effective heater – but no air conditioning and you have to adjust the wing mirrors with little manual levers instead of electric switches.

The three cylinder, one litre engine has an official fuel average of 65.7mpg, a CO₂ rating of 99g/km (so no road tax under current regulations) and insurance shouldn't break the bank with a low 7E (out of 50) rating.

It was a brave decision by Suzuki to replace two older models (the Alto and the Splash) with one, the Celerio. There was an initial problem with a brake part, too, but the company recommissioned the part and retro fitted it to those cars which had already gone out to dealers within days.

The result? Well the Celerio has proved to be a big seller for Suzuki, indicating its the right package which convinces test-driving customers.

Footprint

The Celerio has a small 'footprint' but it's also relatively high which means it's been laid out to seat four adults in comfort – even a 6ft 6ins colleague wasn't cramped in the rear. With its tall stance and five doors, access is easy too.

With light, power assisted steering, a higher-than-average seating position and deep windows it's a breeze to park and to handle around town.

The steering is positive, too, which helps makes the Celerio a pleasant car to drive on the open road. With 68bhp it's no ball of fire but keeps up with even motorway traffic without fuss or excessive engine noise. A typical Suzuki motor, it's more of a purr than a growl.

The ride feels a little firm over poor surfaces, but it's sufficiently well damped to ensure comfort and prevent the bumps throwing the steering off track.

The slowest moving part of the test car was the fuel gauge: while I didn't manage the official 65.7mpg, over a week of driving the actual figure was close to 60mpg which is the best I remember from a petrol car.

If you want, or can afford, to upgrade to the flagship SZ3 version, you can also have Suzuki's new 'dualjet' engine. While it's basically the same unit, with the same overall power output, it is slightly quicker and considerably more economical. With a new fuel injection system, variable valve timing and a few other technical modifications, it is one of the most efficient petrol engines ever produced. Official figures credit it with an incredible 78.4mpg and an ultra low 84g/km.

There's also an 'automatic' option – in fact it's not a traditional auto but an automated manual box, where the work of the clutch is done by electronics and servos. You can still use the gear lever for manual changes (or not, as suits you).

Higher grade models are, of course, better equipped, too, with features such as air conditioning starting at SZ2.

The practical split-fold rear seats are standard, though, with cargo space of 254 litres rising to 726 litres when they're folded flat. That's another area in which the Suzuki goes to the top of the city car class.

Suzuki pride themselves on being the small car experts and certainly the Celerio is something of a master class in packaging.

A small footprint on the road with surprising amounts of room inside, excellent economy and low running costs. It's the sort of honest car which the market (and many car buyers) need.



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Megane hatch is now right up-to-date

By Ed Wiseman

It's no Renaultsport, but the Megane GT is a comfy and good-looking family car. It's also sexier.

Renault's gorgeous design language has finally reached the Megane, bringing the French brand's long-serving family hatch up to date. It's better inside and out, incredibly comfortable, and boasts plenty of French style. Renault is back on form.

The car is based on a new platform, which gives buyers more space on the inside. Some cars have a portrait touchscreen infotainment system, while the range-topping version gets four-wheel steering and even launch control.

It's probably the most striking car in the sector. It attracts interest even from non-car-people, which is pretty remarkable for an ordinary hatchback.

The headlights have an instantly-recognisable C-shaped LED accent, and the tail lights stretch across nearly the whole back end of the car. This makes the car immediately interesting, even from a distance, and especially at night.

Side-on is the only angle from which the Megane looks a bit conventional. Every corner is sculpted in a pleasing way.

Competitors such as the Vauxhall Astra are easy on the eye, but the Megane is one of the best-looking cars on the road today. Renault lacks the gravitas of some of the German brands but is still a smart, upmarket name.

Comfortable

Like the three Meganes before it, this one is comfy. The ride is nice and soft, and the seats – especially in the front – are gloriously comfortable.

The boot is capacious (384 litres, rising to 1,247 litres with the 60:40-splitting rear seats both folded down). This puts it in line with the class-leaders for storage.

Lots of buttons have been replaced with a touchscreen system which, perhaps unsurprisingly, is harder to use. It's not the worst on the market but could frustrate some users who are more used to conventional controls. The Megane will be able to tow conventional caravans.

The full engine line-up hasn't been released for the UK, but Brits can expect a range of petrol and diesel engines that do the job adequately. Driving the 1.6 diesel engine left a bit to be desired – it falls behind the Astra, which would have been unthinkable 10 years ago.

The GT model, which packs a bit more punch, has 202bhp but is still only in 'warm hatch' territory.

Handling is good, and is imperceptibly improved in the GT version with the addition of four-wheel steering. This allows the back wheels to turn a tiny angle either in the same direction or in the opposite direction to the front wheels, depending on speed. This feels good on windy roads but even better on motorways, where lane changes are noticeably smoother.

It still won't compete with the Ford Focus, or even the Vauxhall Astra. But it handles better than the previous generation and leads the way in comfort. Add-ons for the GT include launch control, which is fun but a bit silly – if you want a proper performance model, wait for the inevitable Renaultsport version.

Starting at around £18,000, the Megane is good value. The quality of the materials used in the more upmarket versions mean it's an attractive option across the range, too.

You'll be disappointed if your priority is driving experience, but if you want a smooth, comfortable family wagon – and one that looks great on your drive – you can't do much better than the new Renault Megane.

Full pricing hasn't been released in the UK, but Renault is likely to undercut competitors such as Audi and BMW – and in a lot of ways, the Megane is a superior product.

The Megane is something a little bit different. It's what French cars used to be – comfy, easy to live with and a little bit quirky. This will appeal to families who value style in addition to substance.

TESTED

Renault Megane GT

Engine: 1.6-litre turbo petrol producing 202bhp

Transmission: Seven-speed dual-clutch automatic

Performance: 145mph top speed, 0-62mph in 7.1 seconds

Economy: 47mpg

Emissions: 134g/km



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Good clean car. 07576 308588

FORD COUGAR W Manual, 1998.
S Reg, silver, leather, full MoT,
excellent condition. £750.
01902 047900.

FORD FOCUS LX W reg, 5dr,
1758cc, petrol, 6 months, MoT,
£425. 073 12 044668.

FORD KA 52 plate, 26,000 miles,
good condition, 12 months MoT.
£450. 07722 026508.

MERCEDES ESTATE C200
Classic, auto, MoT Aug, petrol,
1998, 120,000 miles, cream leather
interior. £1,100. 07656 686181.

PEUGEOT 406 GTX 2.2 HDi,
saloon, fully loaded, 80, 8 months
MoT. 125,599k, blue, good condition,
£895. 07885 255203.

PEUGEOT 406 TURBO Diesel
Estate, 1.9 HDi, 16v, 1998, 120,000
miles, MoT, £1,250. 07902 419012.

RENAULT CLIO 1.2, 54 plate, 10
months MoT, alloy wheels, very
good condition. £600. 0no.
0121 503 9041.

RENAULT MEGANE 1400cc, 53
plate (2004), No MoT hence. £250.
01902 677337/07759 979415.

RENAULT MEGANE ESTATE
Dynamic spec 1.5 DCI 2005,
5dr, 1500 miles, good condition.
Blue, 60 mpg, 2000, MoT 2, keys.
£1,195. 01902 753118, 07775 901378.

SABRU FORESTER, All Weather,
silver, 05 reg, 1.6 Petrol, fsh, lady
owner, tidy car. £850. 0no.
01902 791206, after 5pm.

SUBARU LEGACY ESTATE GL
AWD 51 reg, blue, MoT May, 70,000
miles, new clutch & fly wheel, clean
car. £950. 07949 447850.

VAUXHALL CORSA 1.0 3dr, 1999,
57,000 miles, MoT March, Lady
owner very good condition. £500.
0no. 01902 761701.

VAUXHALL CORSA red, 52 plate,
1.0 16v, MoT, starts first time,
good runner. £595. 07912 869829.

VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8
petrol, 105k miles, black, MoT Aug,
any 80k miles, good tyres all
round, recent service and MoT.
£1,195. 01902 743352.

VW POLO, 51 plate, 1.9 TDI, saloon,
silver, 161k miles, diesel, MoT Aug
2016. £400. 07930 374986.

YUGAAR XJS 4.0
1991. Only 66,000 miles. Light
metallic blue. Sports auto box.
Heated leather seats.
SH, 10 months MoT.
Good condition for year.
£3,500. 0no.
07904 662468 (Bridgnorth).

YU W. SCIROCCO 1991, 1 owner,
metallic grey, MoT July, FSH.
£2000. 0no. 07866 410286.

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01630 652993/07773 462797.

8
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keeper, 43k, silver, service history,
metallic blue, MoT June, £1,850.
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silver, 100k miles, fsh, cam belt
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JAGUAR S-TYPE
2.7 DIESEL 05 PLATE
Goodwood Green, full leather,
10 months MoT, Sat Nav,
6 track CD.
Very good condition.
£2,500.
01902 831158.

KIA CEED 1.4 2010
Ltd. edition 'Strike', 1 owner,
FSH, MoT Feb 17, Warranty
till Mar 17, metallic blue, 43k,
A/C, Bluetooth, Alloys, front
electric windows, CD,
£4,350. 0no.
07961 783737.

LEXUS IS250 SEL
2006, only 19,000 miles,
metallic silver, full leather/teak
interior. Immaculate condition.
Must be seen. Full Lexus
service history.
£9,500. 0no.
07961 829361.

VAUXHALL CORSA SXI, silver,
56 plate, 66,000 miles, petrol, manual,
a/c, long MoT, CD player. £1,850.
0no. 07498 243877.

VAUXHALL ZAFIRA, Tourer, 2013,
7seats, 125,000 miles, lady owner,
new condition. £7,500. 0no.
078849 / 07823 478968.

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**PETAR ANTONIC
(Deceased)**

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any
persons having a claim against or an
interest in the Estate of the afore-
mentioned deceased, late of 38 Cottage
Street Kingswinford West Midlands
DY6 7QF, who died on 20/08/2013, are
requested to send particulars thereof
in writing to the Undersigned Solicitors on
or before 01/04/2016, after which date
the Estate will be wound up and no
claims or interest will be entertained
against the Estate.

HOOK AND PARTNERS

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T458049

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development)
(England) Regulations 2004 as amended by The Town and
Country Planning (Local Development) (England)
(Amendment) Regulations 2012

Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council

Notice of Deposit of Development Plan Document
Dudley Borough Development Strategy (Publication Stage
Document) Regulation 19 Publication Consultation

The Dudley Borough Development Strategy is currently being prepared to
guide development within the Borough up to 2026. It consists of local planning
policies and site allocations across the Borough (excluding the town Centres
of Stourbridge, Halesowen and Dudley which have their own Area Action Plans) and, once adopted, will supersede the Dudley Unitary
Development Plan.

Following previous consultation on a Preferred Options version in 2014 and
further modifications in September 2015, this Publication stage version is the
final opportunity to comment on the Dudley Borough Development Strategy
before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local
Government.

Copies of the document are available for public inspection during normal office
hours from Monday 11th January 2016 to Monday 22nd February 2016 at:

**Dudley Council, main reception, 4 Ednam Road, Dudley,
West Midlands, DY1 1HL**
(Monday to Friday 8.45am to 5.00pm)

**Dudley Council, 25 Castle Street, Dudley Town Centre, Dudley,
West Midlands, DY1 1LQ**
(Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.00pm, Saturday 9.00am to 12.00pm)

**On request at the main public libraries in Brierley Hill, Dudley,
Halesowen and Stourbridge (opening times may vary)**

On the Council's planning website:
www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/planning/planning-policy/local-development-framework/devstat/

Comments that relate to "the soundness" of the plan or whether the plan
complies with legal requirements may be submitted between 11th January
2016 and 22nd February 2016 by writing to:

**Planning Policy Section,
Place Directorate,
Dudley Council,
4 Ednam Road,
Dudley,
West Midlands,
DY1 1HZ**

Or via e-mail to localplan@dudley.gov.uk

Only comments made in writing and which arrive at the postal address or
e-mail address specified above by 22nd February 2016 will be able to be
considered by Dudley Council. Comments may also be accompanied by a
request to be notified of the submission and of the Document and details of
the independent examination of the Document which is to be held prior to
its adoption.

For more information contact the above or telephone 01384 814136

Alan Lane

Strategic Director of Place

Dudley Council

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES

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Marie Hogg on

01902 713146

or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk

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**PETAR ANTONIC
(Deceased)**

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any
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LILY, genuine lady looking for a genuine man. I like cosy nights in and am a smoker. Text only mailbox no: 5372466

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunnete seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+. Must be discreet, married or single ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3003 Box 419673

TRISH 44, tall slim young/good looking GSOH, professional, solvent, OHAC affectionate and loves TLC, WLTM male who also likes to be in a loving relationship, 39-50yrs. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420601

DISCREET man wanted by married lady for no strings fun. I'm called Sarah and am 37yrs. Pls call, ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3007 Box: 418167

SAMANTHA pretty brunnete, very busy 36, intelligent, independent with a real lust for life, seeks big-hearted stoic male. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420599

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3011 Box: 403715

MADDIE extremely passionate female 37, seeks reliable male to enjoy the finer things in life and a lasting relationship. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420563

LUCY first time advertiser, 32yrs, tall slim blonde airline worker, seeks discreet gent, any status for casual fling. Looks/age unimportant. Tel: 0906 515 3027 Box: 420237

CHRIS, 40, attractive slim sophisticated redhead, seeking male 30-50's to relax with and get to know. Discretion assured. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420491

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. Tel: 0906 515 3019 Box: 413399

SALLY, 24yrs tall brunnete with feminine curves seeks mature older chap, 35+ for discreet fun only, must be experienced. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3031 Box: 420247

LOUISE, 47, youthful looking female looking for spontaneous male to put some love and lust back into life. Call me. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420445

SALLY, 24yrs tall brunnete with feminine curves seeks mature older chap, 35+ for discreet fun only, must be experienced. ACA. Tel: 0906 515 3028 Box: 420247

ALEXA 9 - slim, attractive, long-haired music loving female, with many interests including dancing, the arts, photography WLTM similar male. Text only to Mailbox no: 5345662

YVONNE, single mum, happy with life, but would like to meet someone to share fun times with. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420269

LOUISE, pretty hairdresser, works long hours, finds it hard to meet a boyfriend, 34yrs, own flat. Text only to Mailbox no: 4192572

CHLOE pretty single female 36yrs, dark hair/eyes, slim build, very lonely and looking for reliable discreet male for mutual companionship maybe more. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420359

JENNI, single mum seeks single dad, own home, can accommodate and loves spoiling her man. Text only to Mailbox no: 415108

JULIE, 47, blonde brown eyes, size 12, varied interests, loves cuddling, kissing and showing affection, seeks similar energetic male friend for TLC. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420357

JACKIE lonely and looking for male company, 48-65. Need a bit of love and affection? Then I'm your girl, call me. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 418169

SARAH, curvaceous brunnete, 35, passionate nature, solvent OHAC, WLTM date again, looking for male to take me out. Looks/Age unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420207

LYN, 43, divorced very lonely single mum, young looking, slim, attractive, WLTM similar male for companionship. Age/looks>Status unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416795

JANE, 47, voluptuous female, long hair, brown eyes, generous curves, would love to spend cosy nights in with that special male. Age/looks unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417985

SUSANNAH, 48, curvy female, romantic, warm and cuddly, seeks similar kind male for a loving relationship with lots of cuddles and kisses. Looks unimportant. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417341

KELLY young attractive vivacious 48y old lady, loves good food, cosy nights in/out, holidays etc, WLTM male for mutual companionship. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419839

CATHY, 42, good looking brunnete with a real passion for life, seeking male for happy times, dates, chats, romance and more. Pls call. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 420175

TARA 22 tall slim but curvy with legs that go all the way up to heaven, WLTM very appreciative confident male for adult fun. Contact me any time. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 414701

FEMALE, dark haired 5'10, curvy, likes reading, walking, cinema, seeks male 40-50 for lasting relationship. Text only to Mailbox no: 507745

PROFESSIONAL black female age 52, enjoys evenings and days out, would like to meet similar Midlands male. Text only to Mailbox no: 507901

CATHY, 42, good looking brunnete with a real passion for life, seeking male for happy times, dates, chats, romance and more. Pls call. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419821

PAT 66, attractive, N/S, likes reading, nights out, seeks gent for friendship, days out and more. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416277

68YR old widow, attractive, seeks since, N/S male, likes reading, meals out and walks. West Midlands. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419385

FEMALE, dark haired 5'10, curvy, likes reading, walking, cinema, seeks male 40-50 for lasting relationship. Text only to Mailbox no: 507745

JULIA 47, looking for genuine, reasonably attractive male friend, may lead to more. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419695

LADY Penelope seeks her very own Parker (47-58) to go on a voyage of discovery and romance. Text only to Mailbox no: 4550237

29, looking for mature professional fun guy, 40-50 to spend good times with. Call me, you have nothing to lose. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419091

FEMALE fun brunnete, attractive, 26, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416287

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FEMALE, dark haired 5'10, curvy, likes reading, walking, cinema, seeks male 40-50 for lasting relationship. Text only to Mailbox no: 507745

JULIA 47, looking for genuine, reasonably attractive male friend, may lead to more. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419695

LADY Penelope seeks her very own Parker (47-58) to go on a voyage of discovery and romance. Text only to Mailbox no: 4550237

29, looking for mature professional fun guy, 40-50 to spend good times with. Call me, you have nothing to lose. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419091

FEMALE fun brunnete, attractive, 26, seeking male for friendship, maybe more. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416287

PROFESSIONAL black female age 52, enjoys evenings and days out, would like to meet similar Midlands male. Text only to Mailbox no: 507901

CATHY, 42, good looking brunnete with a real passion for life, seeking male for happy times, dates, chats, romance and more. Pls call. Tel: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 419821

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Clash goes down to last ball of the innings

Oldswinford (120-3) lost to Enville 'A' (123-3) by three runs

A NEW-look Oldswinford side began proceedings in the WCB Indoor Cricket League with captain Harry Stanier and Owen Williams getting off to a fine start until losing the former, run-out at 40.

Mark Watts (26 no) and Williams (31 no) upped the scoring rate but on the retirement of Williams the run rate declined and a couple of wickets were lost.

Williams' return restored momentum pushing the total on to a competitive 120. In reply the experienced opening pair of Rhodri Parfitt (25 no) and Matt Branch (38 no) put the young Oldswinford bowlers under the cosh.

Enville lost their first wicket at 75 and with both openers gone, the Oldswinford bowlers got a hold on the game and the scoring rate slowed. This unnerved Enville and until the return of Matt Branch a win for Enville looked unlikely but they scraped home on the last ball.

Swindon (129-3) beat Cookley (44 all out) by 85 runs

COOKLEY, on their debut in the Kinver League won the toss, and elected to bowl.

Swindon openers Dave Silcox (31 no) and Luke McDonnell (27 no) took advantage of some unorthodox fielding positions, but the Cookley bowlers stuck manfully to their task as Swindon piled on the runs, finishing on 129-3. Nathan Perry also made 25.

Cookley's first innings in the league did not start well, losing a wicket in the first over. Only Andy Nicholls 24 showed resistance as Cookley's innings finished after only 6.5 overs - all out for 44.

Clegg setting himself an Elite target

CRADLEY teenager Max Clegg is targeting double-figure points every meeting - and that's just in the Elite League!

The 18-year-old will form a powerful spearhead with the National League Heathens alongside Ashley Morris.

The busy Yorkshireman will also ride in the Premier League for Edgbaston while holding down a reserve berth in the top flight with Wolves.

"I've achieved all the targets I've set myself. But I've got some more for this year."

"I definitely want to get double figures home and away this year. That's my Elite League target."

"I don't really have any targets for National League."

"And I don't really put myself under any pressure. What happens, happens. I enjoy my racing."

Skeete shooting for Sam's titles

STOURBRIDGE'S Sam Egginton will defend his British and Commonwealth titles for a second time in Birmingham against new foe Bradley Skeete on March 5.

Promoter Eddie Hearn won the purse bids to stage the contest at the Barclaycard Arena under his Matchroom Boxing banner, with Skeete guided by Frank Warren.

Egginton climbed off the canvas in the second round to retain his crown at the same venue by outpointing Dale Evans last October.

The 22-year-old is now looking to within one fight of a Lonsdale belt, with his final test likely to be vacated champion Frankie Gavin. Egginton's Ben

Wilkes is confirmed for the under-card and faces a tough test in a 10-round final eliminator for the English middleweight title against Peterborough's Cello Renda.

Two other title fights see Brummie Gamal Yafai challenging for Bobby Jenkins's newly-won Commonwealth super bantamweight belt. Older brother and reigning British super flyweight champion Kal Yafai will also feature.

A battle of Birmingham will see Michael Rooney and Marcus Ffrench meet for the vacant Midlands lightweight crown.

Tickets have already become available for 'Matchroom Fight Pass' members priced at £40, £60, £100

and £150 VIP, from www.theticketfactory.com

Dudley's Ryan Aston is preparing for his shot at the big time in London tomorrow night (Friday).

Aston, 24, will undertake his first 12-rounder when he co-challenges for the vacant IBF International light middleweight title at York Hall.

Undefeated opponent and co-challenger Ahmet Patterson is the favourite on his own turf, led by promoter Frank Warren whose television channel BoxNation will broadcast the fight live.

The 28-year-old, from East Dulwich, has already lifted the English and Southern area titles but at welterweight. He's unbeaten in 16, with six stoppages.

Riders have to tough it out in muddy conditions

A RECORD number of participants - including a strong West Midlands contingent - took part in the national cyclo cross championships in Shrewsbury.

There was real strength across all the categories with ex-Olympian Liam Killeen winning the national men's title, Nikki Harris, fourth in last year's world championships, just edging out Helen Wyman on the last lap to regain the women's title and former Halesowen rider Beth Crumpton taking silver in the Women's U23.

The junior racing was significantly oversubscribed with selection based on national ranking points gained throughout the season.

Two riders from Halesowen Cycling Club qualified for the Championships finals on a day where conditions were very tough.

The low lying nature of the course and the recent wet weather meant parts of the course were pure mud with no option but to run carrying the bike rather than ride.

Jameson Blain came in 39th in the U16s in a result that would have disappointed him after a successful season both in cyclo cross and on the track and road where he has consistently finished among the leaders at national level.

In the U14s up and coming Simon Wyllie really showed what a good rider he is becoming, finishing eighth in the National U14s among a very strong field.

In a committed display of riding in tough boggy conditions, hard running through several inches of mud and adept bike handling in the technical sections Wyllie finished strongly, completing the race in 40 minutes, only seconds from chasing down fourth spot.

Olympic stars pitch up for celebration

OLYMPIC Star Sunday football team members turned back the clock in style as they celebrated 50 years since the club's formation.

Star, who played through the 1960s to the late 1990s when they folded, were an iconic side in the Stourbridge and Lye area - and one of the most feared amateur outfits in the country.

The club's remaining players met at the Giggins pub in Stourbridge pub to mark the milestone. The team was named Star after the local pub. Former manager and West Midlands non-league football guru, Alan Webb, told how they rose to prominence. "I got married and moved in 1963 where there was a team called Swinford Rangers," he said.

"They played at Swan Pool Park and were part of the Coronation League in Birmingham."

"They weren't really going anywhere and the club took a bit of a hiatus, we went in and changed things. I became the manager."

Webb led the club to great success, they were three-times winners of the Kidderminster Sunday League before moving on to the more competitive Festival Premier League.

The club's home moved to The Plough in Wollaston and later to Lye Town.

Trophies

The evergreen Webb still finds himself helping out with Lye under current bosses Martin Thomas and Darren Goodall.

Star went on to appear in numerous finals and claimed a haul of trophies.

Webb's association ran through to the early 1980s, when he stepped into Saturday football and spells with Gornal Athletic, Halesowen Town, Stourbridge and Worcester City.

Webb had long since left the fold when Star caused a stir by going all the way to claim the FA Sunday Cup in 1998 - beating a St Joseph's (Luton) side that included ex-England and Chelsea striker Kerry Dixon in the final at Peterborough's London Road. However, Star folded not long after.

Webb has strong opinions about the club's ending, but his passion and memories will remain with him forever.

"At one point we were voted in the top six Sunday teams in the country," he said. "I'm confident that our side, back in the day, would be comfortable against any of the bigger semi-pro sides around now."



Star Olympic line up for the 1965 team photo at Swan Pool Park. Alan Webb is first on the left, back row



The former players meet up again for reunion in Stourbridge 50 years later

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Hales hang on as time against DK

DK 2nds 0 Old Halesonians 2nds 10
WITH the first team game cancelled, all eyes were on the seconds against rivals DK.

Within the first two minutes, Old Hales were on the attack and, after DK were penalised from a scramble to turn the ball over, Old Hales second row Louis Madigan reacted quickly, took the tap penalty and forced his way over the try line to score.

Old Hales had the edge in the set pieces and their forwards made some strong runs during the first half, particularly Kieron Haynes, Jay Martin and Mike Topping but the DK defence held firm. There were no further scores in the first half, so it finished 5-0 to Old Hales.

Old Hales backs started the second half with some excellent interplay. From a scrum deep in the Old Hales half the ball was moved to the left.

Luke Fenton made a well timed pass to Andy Holloway who made his way into the DK half before making a lovely offload to fullback Alex Herbert, joining the line at speed.

On the DK 22 metre line Herbert passed to left wing Jake Shellis who outpaced the DK defence to score. The conversion was unsuccessful so the score was 10-0 to Old Hales.

The remaining 30 minutes of the second half was a hard fought battle with both teams testing each other's defence. Towards the end, DK attacked the Old Hales line but time ran out for them.

Ledbury 2nds 3 Old Hales 3rds 39

OLD Hales first game of 2016 resulted in a fine victory over Ledbury 2nds.

Old Hales scorers were: Tries: George Eccles (2), Alex Church, Pete Cox, Calum Roberts, Harry Higgs; Conversions: Andy Tromans, Gaz Price (2); Penalties: Andy Tromans

Teams frustrated as matches are hit by the weather

OLD Halesonians Hockey Club were thwarted by the weather, with all but the Men's 2nd XI and Badgers sides having games called off due to frozen pitches.

The Men's 1st XI were about set to travel to Barton when the call came to say their game was off, meaning they were unable to build on the previous week's victory against Bridgnorth.

Hales were missing Cole Hickman through suspension, but goals from Paul Woodall and Doug Houghton sealed a 2-1 win for the side with the league's best defensive record.

That win saw the side rise to equal second, with Barton one of the other two sides level on points. Hales face the other side equal in second, Loughborough Town, on Saturday at King Edward Five Ways School, pushback 1.30pm.

The postponement meant the 2nd XI had a partisan home crowd behind them as they were held to a 3-3 draw by Aldridge & Walsall. Goals came from Mark Raby, Adam Hill and Joe Thorn. The Badgers beat Finchfield, 3-2 with goals from Jakob Baker, Lewis Jepson and Joe Shackleton.

Sam and Ryan belt up for boxing action

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Pitching in for 50-year celebration

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Happy returns for birthday boy Matt



Matt Dodd, centre, celebrates the winning goal

Braintree Town 0 Stourbridge 1

STOURBRIDGE are through to the last 16 of the FA Trophy after knocking out their Vanarama National League opponents.

Gary Hackett's men now travel to either National League North side Bradford Park Avenue or Northern Premier League rivals Nantwich Town on February 6 for a place in the last eight.

Continued issues with the pitch at Braintree's Cressing Road ground meant Saturday's game was the first held there for several weeks. Matt Dodd – on his 29th birthday – got the all-important goal, scoring from close range early in the

Football

second half. Stourbridge are into the last 16 of non-league football's premier Cup competition for the first time since 1972/73, and are now one win away from equalising their best ever performance of a quarter-final place in 1970/71.

The winning goal came on 56 minutes when Karl Hawley put a low cross in, the ball came off Lait and Matt Dodd directed the ball into the net over the crossbar.

Delighted Hackett said: "I am proud of all the players. It was a great result."

Blue hoops still lead the way at top

BEN Foster may have been bested by Tim Dalton of Severn AC in the Birmingham & District Cross Country League on Saturday but the blue hoops still extended their lead at the top of the table.

The weekend's fixture was over a testing six miles of muddy twists and turns in Droitwich. Twenty DK Runners arrived on the start line, to try to consolidate their lead at the top of Division 3.

Although Foster was unable to add to a previous win at the venue from his last visit he was still a comfortable second, finishing in 37.55 with Rob Meredith in fifth, Matt Biggs in 11th, James Wright 12th, Simon Hughes 29th and Richard Bate 30th to bring home the A team.

The B team were well placed with Rob Sannwald finishing in 33rd in 42.45. Dave Norman was 35th, Stuart Perkins 40th, Daren Thompson 45th, Simon Blizzard 54th and Darran Bishop 57th.

With DK winning the fixture on the day by 40 points they remain top of the division with what appears to be a comfortable lead from Northbrook AC and Sparkhill Harriers. The B team are also top of the B team league.

The women travelled to Gloucester where Tracy Alderson was first home in 77th in 26.49. Helen Tromans finished a single second and one place behind.

Less than 24 hours later there was another opportunity to run round a muddy field in the Midlands Masters Cross Country Championships in Wolverhampton. Open only to over-35s, this attracts a small but competitive field with five athletes from DK lining up on their second start line of the weekend.

It was worth the effort as James Wright claimed an age group bronze over the 8k course. There was also a team silver from Matt Biggs, Dave Norman, Simon Hughes and Darran Bishop.

New fixture dates to tackle backlog

THE Northern Premier League have re-arranged several of Stourbridge's outstanding league games that have been lost due to their cup runs.

Gary Hackett's side face a fixture backlog because of runs to the FA Cup second round and the last 16 of the FA Trophy.

They will now host Marine FC on Monday, February 1 at 7.45pm, then, subject to an FA Trophy replay, they will travel to Grantham Town on Tuesday, February 9.

The Glassboys will also host Ashton United on Monday, March 7 and travel to Workington on Saturday, March 19.

Pressure increased on leaders



Centre James Otutaha forces his way over for Stour's third try

Stourbridge 23 Harrogate 10

STOURBRIDGE'S win over Harrogate in National 2 North was their seventh in the last eight games, increasing the pressure on leaders Macclesfield and Sedgley Park whose games were lost to the weather last weekend.

On a soft Stourton Park surface Stour struck first with two penalties by outside-half Rod Petty, veteran scrum half Toby Handley then breezing through a huge gap in the defences to score the opening try.

Harrogate full-back Lewis Minkin struck back with a penalty but with Stour's dominant pack camped in their 22 Harrogate first lost

flanker Tom Harvey for cynically pulling down a maul, then shipped a try to Stour winger Josh Trinham when the hosts moved the ball wide.

A Stour bonus point victory looked a formality when a direct run at the defence by centre James Otutaha produced another score straight after the break, but Stour were left to rue a sin-binning for a dangerous tackle by replacement Connor Nicholls and numerous missed opportunities as they failed to score a fourth try.

With nothing to lose Harrogate started to throw the ball around and bagged a well-worked consolation try by winger Luke Edwards, final score 23-10.

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